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Evelyn Wood

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THE LIFE

OF

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL

SIR HENRY EVELYN WOOD

V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.,

Knight of the Legion of Honour, Grand Cordon of the Medjidie, First Class, &c., &c.

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BY

CHARLES WILLIAMS, F.J.I.

Author of "The Armenian Campaign, 1877," "Notes on Transport in Afghanistan, 1878-9," "How we lost Gordon," &c., &c.

"Since these arms of mine had seven years' pith
Till now . . . . . they have used
Their dearest action in the tented field,
And little of this great world can I speak
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle.
. . . . . The story of my life
From year to year; the battles, sieges, fortunes
That I have pass'd."

Othello, Act I., Scene 3.

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To

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GENERAL SIR GARNET JOSEPH

VISCOUNT WOLSELEY, K.P., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., &c., &c.,

Commander of the Forces in Ireland,

This Volume,

CONTAINING AN IMPERFECT RECORD OF THE NOBLE CAREER OF HIS "OLD AND DEAR COMRADE," TO WHOM THE ARMY "OWES A DEEP DEBT OF GRATITUDE" WHICH IT "WILL BYE-AND-BYE ACKNOWLEDGE,"

Is Inscribed

BY HIS EVER OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT

CHARLES WILLIAMS

to interest the world and to prove an example to young soldiers. But, although it has been my good fortune to have received the most ample and kindly assistance from many of Sir Evelyn's brother officers, it is well that it should be thoroughly understood I am solely responsible for every statement made in the book, and that the subject of the work has not seen any single passage in the text. The reason for this will be apparent to any one who does me the honour of reading the book. There are still smouldering controversies of which the embers had to be touched, and as regards which Sir Evelyn's mouth is closed at once by his official position and by reasons that, if they would not be binding on everybody, are, at any rate, binding on him. The whole truth about one of these controversies may never be known so long as he lives, but an adequate idea of it may be obtained from these pages. I would only add that the composition of the book has been a labour of love in the intervals of a busy and active winter.

C. W.

PREFACE.

A TASTE for Military Biography is one of the features of the time. There does not seem to be any adequate reason why it should be confined to worthies who have passed away. And, in one instance, the demand for a life of a living soldier, General Viscount Wolseley, was so great that edition after edition was called for in a very short time. The life of Sir Evelyn Wood covers all but the same period as that of his former chief and warm friend. It is even more romantic. Its active phases began earlier in youth, and the two careers have run in nearly parallel grooves. But the story of one differs materially from the story of the other.

During the late Infantry Manœuvres in South Hants, I became acquainted with the fact that Sir Evelyn Wood's devoted mother, and, after her death, his sister Mrs. Steele, had, rather to his perturbation, privately printed, for the benefit of his family, a record of his life. The privilege of a perusal of it was accorded to me, and I conceived the idea that, told on a more extensive scale, the story was one which could not fail

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THE LIFE OF

LIEUT.-GEN. SIR HENRY EVELYN WOOD.

CHAPTER I.

AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

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Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Evelyn-Wood, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Knight of the Legion of Honour, and Grand Cordon of the First Class of the Order of the Medjidieh, was born at Cressing, in Essex, on February 9th, 1838, the youngest son of the Reverend Sir John Page Wood, Baronet, vicar of the parish, and subsequently rector of St. Peter's, Cornhill, in the City of London, of which his father had been Lord Mayor, while Sir Evelyn's uncle was Lord Hatherley,

Vice-Chancellor and Lord Chancellor of England. The City of London has given many great men and great families to this country, but scarcely one house in our days which has attained equal reputation."

When he was nine years old he was sent to Marlborough, where he remained two years in what is called the Grammar School, and in February, 1849, he was passed on to the "College." Here he remained for three years, and was just fourteen when he left it to enter the Royal Navy. Several of his contemporaries remember nothing very particular about him; others have a lively recollection of his amiability, while a certain combativeness appears to have impressed others. But all these impressions are inevitably coloured by the knowledge of subsequent years. His house-master was the Rev. Frederick H. Bond, who tells me that the "so-called house-masterships of the early days of Marlborough College implied so very slight a connection between master and pupil that, unless there was some other tie between them, it led to no intimate knowledge of conduct and character, such as nowadays generally follows this relationship in our public schools." Mr. Bond adds, that Master Wood was a pupil "during that short but trying period of comparative insubordination in the school, about which so many absurd exaggerations appeared in the 'School Magazine' in after years, when it was the fashion there to ignore all the difficulties of the early start, and to speak contemptuously

of the 'Dark Ages' of the school." The Rev. John S. Thomas, the present Bursar, says that

"Sir Evelyn joined the school in February, 1849, at the age of eleven, and left us at Easter 1852, when he immediately entered the Navy. I joined the school a year before he did and I was two years older than he, but I remember him very well, although we were not intimately associated in our school life. He was, as I recall him, an exceedingly high-spirited active little fellow, who entered with delight into every enterprise which suggested a lark, and a vent for the superabundance of his own spirits, but always with absolute good nature."

One who knows him well says, "Here, at least, the boy was father of the man."

Unlike the naval cadets of to-day he went through no training-ship course, and was, perhaps, none the worse officer on that account; but, having passed the required examination on April 15th, 1852, he joined H.M.S. *Queen*, under Captain Charles Wise, in the Channel Fleet on July 3rd. On the 14th April, 1854, a memorable year for many another besides Cadet Wood, he received the following certificate from his uncle, Captain Michell, who had succeeded Captain Wise:

"These are to certify the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that Mr. E. Wood served as naval cadet on board Her Majesty's ship under my command, from the

3rd day of July, 1852 (with an original entry of the 15th of April, 1852), to the date hereof, during which time he conducted himself with diligence, sobriety, and attention, and was always obedient to command.

"Given on board H.M.S. *Queen*, this 14th day of April, 1854.

"FRED. T. MICHELL, Captain."

H.M.S. *Queen* had joined the Fleet at Constantinople in the latter part of 1853, and in January had gone on into the Pontic Sea, of which, under its more familiar name of the Euxine, Lord Byron has made an opprobrious remark. The occasion of this move was the Russian massacre of Turkish sailors at Sinope or Sinoop. Thus, even in the first stage of his public life, had the parson's young son some experience of "the Operations of War." And it was while waiting for the development of diplomacy that he passed his examination for midshipman according to the following certificate;

"Pursuant to an order from Fred. T. Michell, Esq., Captain of H.M.S. *Queen*:

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, have examined Mr. Evelyn Wood, naval cadet of H.M.S. *Queen*, touching his qualifications to serve as a midshipman in Her Majesty's Navy, and find as follows:—

"He produces logs for the period he has served as naval cadet, and certificates of his conduct during that period: he also affords satisfactory proof of his being fourteen years of age.

"He has a due knowledge of arithmetic, geometry, and trigonometry, and a practical acquaintance with the use of the quadrant and the manner of making observations for ascertaining the latitude and longitude therewith, and he can keep a ship's reckoning by the common rules usually called a 'day's work;' he has also a due knowledge of steering and managing a boat under oars and sails, and of knotting and splicing.

"Given under our hands on board H.M.S. *Queen*, in Kavarna Bay, this 15th day of April, 1854.

"F. W. BURNETT, Commander.

"JOHN N. LAVERTY, Naval Instructor.

"Approved, FRED. T. MICHELL, Captain."

Mr. Wood was entitled to wear the white patch on the collar just one week when he was under fire from the batteries protecting Odessa, which was bombarded by his ship. The occasion was exciting enough. I do not find any mention of Midshipman Wood in the records of this, his first fight, but he saw a sight which may well linger on his memory, for probably no man will ever witness such another in all the ages to come. These were the times when the steam wreath (to adopt Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell's beautiful idea) had not yet wholly wrapt the white-winged fleet—"meet cloak! it was their winding-sheet." In the Black Sea squadrons there were many powerful and beautiful ships as yet propelled by sails alone. Among these was the *Arethusa*, a fifty-gun frigate. The vessels went in one

after the other and engaged the batteries ashore (where just a little before H.M.S. *Tiger*, having got aground, had been obliged to strike to a battery of horse-artillery). When it came to the turn of the *Arethusa* she went in like the rest, without any steam power to bring her out. The Admiral signalled to her to come back; but her captain, though he had not a blind eye like Nelson, had as good an excuse. He replied to the signal, "Not understood!" and took his beautiful craft in under all plain sail, delivered his broadside, came round, and in coming let fly with his stern guns, and then, completing his pivot movement, delivered the other broadside and got out unharmed, amid the hearty cheers of the fleet. If Henry Evelyn Wood took no leading part in this his first smelling of gunpowder, no great time was to elapse before he made a name that many of his seniors might well envy. In May, June and July his ship was cruising off Sebastopol, preventing the Russian vessels in the harbour from repeating their Sinope feat, which they seemed indisposed to attempt in view of the presence of British sailors. On the 14th and 15th September Mr. Wood was engaged in boats landing troops at Eupatoria, responsible, though not, under the circumstances, distinguished work. On the 20th of the same month he had an opportunity of seeing part of the Battle of the Alma from the tops of the *Queen*; and when Balaclava was, according to Sir E. Hamley, stupidly made the base of operations, he was

transferred thither for service in the Naval Brigade. In less than a week after joining ashore he had nearly won the Victoria Cross, then "in the air" but not yet gazetted for sixteen months more, having volunteered to lead a working party which brought into cover a quantity of powder under a heavy fire from an exposed position just where the fire of the Redan and the Malakhoff crossed. Almost a twelvemonth later Captain (afterwards Sir) William Peel, R.N., wrote to the Rev. Sir John Page Wood, Bart., as follows respecting this act:

"*September 6th*, 1855.

"Your son was only known to me through his gallant behaviour. On the 17th of October he volunteered, with Mr. Daniels, my other A.D.C., to bring up powder from the rear through a fire which daunted others; and the spirit he showed on that occasion was not exceptional, but was maintained throughout. It was the more noble as there were no spectators. The names of these two heroes are known through the whole army, and I almost thought it inconvenient having two such spirits round me. I trust his wound is doing well, it must be very tedious and painful.

"Yours very truly,
"WILLIAM PEEL."

The next day after this powder expedition, the young middy contrived to again distinguish himself, and in the course of the afternoon, standing in the

21-ton battery, Captain Peel thanked Mr. Wood, in the presence of the guns' crews under his command, for having mounted and extinguished, under a very heavy fire from the Malakhoff and the Redan, the roof of a magazine which had been set on fire by Russian shells. A senior officer twice shouted in tones of alarm that there was a shell in the magazine which lay under the parapet of the battery. When he turned round, the Essex midshipman was seen serenely, if vigorously, trampling out the incandescence of tarpaulin and wood which had resulted from the explosion of the projectile, and which would, no doubt, have ultimately, if not quite immediately, reached the combustibles within. These two acts Captain Peel specially reported to Lord Raglan, the Commander-in-chief; and later in the winter, his lordship, in presenting Mr. Wood to Marshal Niel, mentioned them to the future victor of Solferino. The winter passed; how, only those survivors know who declare with Sir Evelyn Wood that the safety of the force was due to nobody so much as to William Howard Russell. In the spring began the Second Bombardment; and on the 9th of April Mr. Wood was again thanked before his men for the heroic act of repairing the parapet, at an angle of the 21-ton gun battery, under the same very heavy fire which had destroyed it. But there was no other, no head-quarters or national reward, for an act which would have won the Victoria Cross for an older hand. Already the

midshipman had seen this coveted distinction given to Mr. Daniels for the achievement of the 17th of October, in which Mr. Wood had unquestionably set the example. Sir William Peel, however, did what he knew would be very grateful to his youthful subordinate when he wrote Sir John Page Wood, under date H.M.S. *Leander*, April 18th, 1855 :

"You will be glad to hear that not only did your son show the most beautiful courage in battery, but his conduct and manners are as exemplary as his courage."

A month later Sir William got Mr. Wood appointed his aide-de-camp, as the letter of the 6th September has already shown. Here may well be introduced a letter sent last autumn to a distinguished officer from Sergt.-Major H. Burke, 1st V. B. Queen's West Surrey Regiment, which tells of two of Wood's exploits :

"SIR,

"In forwarding you my record of service for your recommendation that I may be granted by H.R.H. the C. in C., the medal and annuity for long and meritorious service—I beg to inform you that during the Crimean War, in the 21-ton gun battery, in which General Sir Evelyn Wood, who was there a midshipman in the battery, a tumbrel of powder came up one morning in the early days of the siege, and Captain Peel and a Naval officer called for volunteers to empty it into the magazine. I was one of the men who came forward to

do so. Sir Evelyn Wood, as the midshipman present at the occasion, will perhaps recollect Captain Peel's words after the tumbrel was emptied—they had no business to send powder at that time of the day, and that it should have been sent up at night; if a shell happened to strike it, it would be serious, and he would report it. I think also he was the midshipman who, where our battery blew up a magazine at Malakoff (and we cheered) took the Union Jack off the bank and planted it on the parapet. He hardly got down when a round shot or shell from the enemy's batteries cut the staff. He mounted the parapet a second time and called to some tars to bring him some sand-bags to prop it up. He scarcely had got down the second time when it was struck for a third time, and on getting up, finding there was no staff to plant it by, spread it out on the top of the parapet. If, sir, you would kindly ask General Sir Evelyn Wood, having served under fire with him in the Crimea, to interest himself in your recommendation, and use his great influence with H.R.H. to make my case a special one—after nearly fifty years in Her Majesty's service in different parts of the world, as will be seen in my record, I shall be ever grateful to him."

In due course came along another achievement, destined similarly to go unrewarded, except for a barren notice twice in despatches. It was on Waterloo day that this act of derring do was accomplished, and with it ceased for a time the active work of our middy. An assault was made on the Redan. This is not the place

to describe the plan of operations, and their result. They are written by an immortal pen on paper that will never fade. The Naval Brigade was mainly told off to the right storming column. During the assault Wood was twice wounded, but he insisted on going on, and he actually carried a ladder to the abattis, and was the only naval officer engaged who reached the Redan. Sir Stephen Lushington commanded the Naval Brigade at this time; and he wrote the following letter to Captain Michell, whose father (Wood's grandfather), had been Captain Michell, R.N., and admiral in the Portuguese service:

"CAMP BEFORE SEVASTOPOL, 10·30 A.M.

"*June* 19, 1855.

"MY DEAR MICHELL,

"You will be sorry to hear your young nephew Wood has been wounded by a grape shot in the arm. The shot struck the bone obliquely, and was cut out when he got into camp. I saw him in the trenches, and he bore it like a hero. He was Peel's aide-de-camp; and Peel endeavoured to keep the boy from the murderous fire into which they plunged with the scaling-ladders, but he would take no refusal, and went out with the rest. Wood will be at Kazatch to-day, in Lord Raglan's carriage. Will you have a boat?"

Captain Peel also wrote to his brother Frederick, who was a year older than himself, and six years older than the present Speaker of the House of Commons—three sons of whom even a great Prime Minister might well be

proud, if there is consciousness beyond the grave. He said:

"Would you let Sir Page Wood know that his gallant son behaved with extreme intrepidity? He was, or is, my aide-de-camp, and received a severe wound from a grape-shot, but will not lose his arm. I can assure you that I thought more of that boy than of anything else, and tried in vain to plead some excuse for getting him out of the way; but he *would* be my aide-de-camp, and it would have been a worse blow to have denied him. Thank God! he is safe; and it was such a relief to me."

No sooner had Lord Raglan heard that Mr. Wood was injured, and would have to go on board, than he ordered his carriage to be at his disposal to the port, and sent a staff-officer to say so. Nor did his appreciation of the bravery of our hero stop there, for, in reply to a letter from the young man's uncle, he wrote:

"I am very glad to have had the opportunity of being in the smallest degree useful to your nephew, Mr. E. Wood, whose distinguished career cannot fail to enlist everybody in his favour. I am rejoiced to hear that he is going on well."

Whose distinguished career! It is a commendation to have lived for, and died for, from one's Commander-in-chief. But "the boy" of Lushington, "that boy" of Peel, was only seventeen years and not four months

old when he was sent on board the *Queen*, after nine months' service ashore, during which he never missed a day's duty. He was never to do another under the pennant. Dr. Liddell, the Director-General, described the wound as follows :—"Struck on the left fore-arm by a grape shot which entered the posterior aspect of the arm, glanced from the ulna, which it laid bare, and passed underneath the integuments to the front of the forearm, where it lodged." The shot was extracted the same day. Admiral Lushington gave Wood balm for his wound by informing him that he had been recommended (at last) for the Victoria Cross, his name standing third on the list, in order of merit. But he did not get the decoration, though this was the third time he had fairly won it. The world is for those who know how to wait. But it is scarcely surprising that Mr. Wood was rather sick of a service in which work was so hard, knocks so plentiful, and recognition so scanty. Lord Raglan, indeed, mentioned him in despatches as having "particularly distinguished" himself, and working throughout the whole siege; Admiral Lushington not only gave him a formal certificate but added "an extra": "I can strongly recommend this young officer for his gallantry and good conduct during the whole time he was under my command." And, when the City of London entertained the Naval leader at a banquet, Wood was one of three Lord Lyons thought it right to mention with especial encomium:

"All behaved well; but I doubt if in the whole history of chivalry we could find anything finer than the conduct of Captain Peel and his two gallant aides-de-camp, one of whom was wounded placing the scaling ladders against the walls of the Redan," the "one" being now Sir Evelyn Wood. For three weeks he remained on the *Queen* in hope of getting ashore again, but as he did not mend rapidly he was sent to the Sailors' Hospital at Therapia, and after a while to England. At home he seems to have exercised a very great deal of the sagacity which has long distinguished him. He appears to have thought that there was no great chance for an aspiring man in the Navy. He was not yet eighteen, it is true, and with luck he might expect in due time to attain flag-rank. But the war was languishing to its close; and he had seen enough of the Navy to know that in time of peace the opportunities of distinction are for the naval lieutenant few and far between, while in time of war he gets more kicks than decorations. However this may have been in his case, he determined to leave the Navy, and he sent in his resignation to the Admiralty on the 7th September, being then only seventeen years and seven months old, and with a reputation that many an admiral might be proud of. With unusual promptness, the Whitehall magnates accepted the resignation, and expressed their regret "that so gallant an officer is lost to the Naval Service."

Dr. W. H. Russell, in his invaluable book on "the British Expedition to the Crimea," thus refers to the close of Wood's naval career, in the account of the assault on the Redan:

"The detachments from the Naval Brigade consisted of four parties of sixty men each, one for each column, but only two of them went out, the other two being kept in reserve; they were told off to carry scaling-ladders and wool-bags, and to place them for the storming parties. Captain Peel who commanded was wounded, his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Wood, the then midshipman of H.M.S. *Queen*, displayed the greatest gallantry; though badly wounded in the arm, he got up to the abattis and rendered himself so conspicuous for a gallantry, of which he had indeed given several proofs on previous occasions, that Lord Hardinge presented him with a commission in the 13th Light Dragoons, on his expressing a wish to change into the Army."

And, respecting the opening of the Second Bombardment in April, though he does not refer to the exploit at the parapet, Dr. Russell shows in a few living words something of the conditions under which it was achieved. "The Sailors' Brigade suffered very severely; although they only worked thirty-five guns in the various batteries, they lost more men than all our siege-train, working, and covering parties put together."

CHAPTER II.

BOOT AND SADDLE.

A Dashing Dragoon—Returns to Turkey—Very ill in Hospital—Admiralty Meanness—The Legion of Honour—The Medjidieh—An Historic Parallel—The Indian Mutiny—"Death or Glory"—Arrival in India—Learning Hindustani—Outpost Work—In Action—High Praise—Great Gallantry—Commands a Regiment at twenty-two—The V.C. at last—The "Penn'orth of bronze"—A fine Testimonial—Unjustly censured—Between two Fires—Ruffling a Rajah—A beau ideal Sowar—Promised another Regiment—Home Again—Major at Twenty-four—Riding a Giraffe—Robbed but not Murdered.

THERE is something more than a suspicion of a pre-arrangement about the resignation of Midshipman Wood. There was not much fame left for him to earn in the Navy, and if his soul yearned for something more active than keeping harbour watch, or looking after the holystoning of decks, or sounding for coral reefs, or winning prize money over a slave dhow, his attitude is at least comprehensible by the landsman. It is reported of the late Admiral Farragut that when some long-shore man asked him where he would like to be in a future naval battle, he replied "Give me at least one foot on the shingle every time." Mr. Henry Evelyn Wood

was to see his future fighting ashore. He had been in Russia as a sailor, he now sought to go there as a soldier. On the morrow of his resignation from the Navy, he entered the Army as a cornet in the 13th Light Dragoons, now the 13th Hussars. His commission was given him, we have seen, without purchase, probably at the instance of Lord Raglan, and expressly as an acknowledgment of his services in the Crimea. The Blue and Buffs were in Turkey, and Cornet Wood, having joined the depôt at Dorchester on the 1st of October, left it and embarked for Constantinople five days before Christmas. If, in that time, he passed Riding School, he could have known nothing about riding before, since every Riding Master knows, or is ready to maintain, that it takes three months to get rid of the civilian seat. But this by the way. He got to his regiment, one of the juniors in which was Col. Stanley Clarke, now equerry to the Prince of Wales, and had not long joined when his former privations and the terrible winter of the Byzantine Bosphorus told their tale, so he went down with diarrhœa, low typhoid fever, and pneumonia of the right side, accompanying disease of the apex of the right lung. Five days out of hospital, and nearly two months in, at Scutari, brought him to a state of partial convalescence, thanks to the nursing of his mother, Lady Wood, who devotedly went out to look after her beloved boy. But peace was concluded, and there was no use in staying, even had the doctors been willing. He was compulsorily

invalided home, being allowed the special privilege, in consequence of his weak state, of having his regimental servant with him. Meanwhile his people at home had bought him a step, and he became lieutenant a week before his eighteenth birthday. He reached England on May 16th, and, little more than a month after, he was decreed a Chevaliership in the Legion of Honour. Thus he was rewarded by a foreign country before his own land gave him so much as a medal. Nay, more, the Admiralty had the incredible meanness to strike his name out of the list of recommendations for the Victoria Cross, on the ground that he had left the Navy, declaring that it meant to reserve the decoration for those afloat. On this matter Sir S. Lushington characteristically wrote the young chevalier: "You have no one in the world to thank for the Legion of Honour but your own gallant conduct throughout the war, from the day you made me a saucy speech when acting as my guide, to the last crowning act when you walked up from the Redan with a huge grape shot sticking in your arm, and which, by the way, I took for the bone protruding. I still hope to see the Victoria Cross on your breast, though it does look as if the said cross has died a natural death. With that I had something to do." It is not clear whether the Admiral had something to do with the death of the cross, or with the recommendation of Mr. Wood for it; there is probably a little of both meanings in the phrasing, as there was, and to some small extent is, a

school which believes there should be no rewards for acts of exceptional valour, since every act of valour comes within the plain circle of a soldier's or sailor's duties. Long after the Admiralty had struck the name of Wood from the list of those recommended for the bit of blue ribbon and the penn'orth of bronze, Sir S. Lushington wrote Sir J. Page Wood:

"Your son was one of the first officers I recommended for the Victoria Cross, and certainly one of the most gallant in the Naval Brigade. My letter still remains at the Admiralty, as well as a remonstrance I wrote on finding his name among those left out [? not finding his name among those left in]. It is still my opinion that Mr. Wood deserves the Victoria Cross as much as any one I recommended at the same time, not excepting his gallant chief, the late Sir William Peel."

Before these lines were written, however, many things had happened; Mr. Wood had been gazetted to the Medjidieh of the fifth class, "Royal Navy," the Lords of the Admiralty not caring to act up to their avowed principle in anything but the Victoria Cross. And the Indian Mutiny had broken out.

So far there is a certain parallel between the career of Sir Evelyn Wood, and that of a very famous and self-reliant general in our earlier history. Charles Mordaunt, Lord Mordaunt by inheritance, Earl Mordaunt by creation, and Earl of Peterborough by inheritance, went

into the Navy in his youth, a hundred and eighty years before our hero, and changed into the Army, opening his service ashore, also with a siege, that of Tangier. But the early years of the fiery earl in the land service were not full of stirring work such as fell to the lot of Lieutenant Wood. At first, as has been seen, there was nothing but disappointment in the young soldier's military service—disappointment due to illness caused by exposure. Yet he was soon to have his chance and to use it. When the Tiger sprung on the slumbering Lion Mr. Wood applied for an exchange from the Blue and Buffs to a regiment serving in Hindustan. But it was not easy to effect an exchange when the very attempt to return home would have branded a man as a coward for life. So, as there are more ways than one of cooking an egg, another way was found for Mr. Wood to compass the desire of his heart. He was transferred at his own request to the 17th Lancers, the "Death and Glory Boys," whose acquaintance he had already made in the Crimea, and whose proud motto, "*pro Rege, pro Lege, pro Patria conamur*," he might well have taken as his own from that day to this. Three months, however, were lost before the transfer was settled, and then no time was lost in embarking. But those were slow days. There was no eighteen or nineteen days' run from London to Bombay, and Mr. Wood, though he started in October, did not reach the city "primis in Indis" until just before Christmas. The regiment lay in canton-

ments at Kirki, four miles from Poona. He was here for four or five months, and during that time he received the Crimean medal, with clasps for Inkerman and Sebastopol, and the fifth class of the Turkish Medjidieh, as well as the Turkish war medal, and he did not waste time. At first it seemed as if he would be out of all the fighting, but that was not his fault, and indeed there were many dozens of men then as zealous in like case. He set himself to do the right thing, to qualify himself for employment by learning the native tongue which "goes" all over India. In May 1858, when a squadron of the 17th was marched to Mhow, a cantonment near Indore, the capital of Holkar's territory and the seat of the Governor-General's Agent for Central India, Wood went with it. On the march the native officer in charge of the commissariat deserted, and Mr. Wood, who was already acting as interpreter in Hindustani; assumed charge of supplies, his first experience in a department in which, as we shall see, he has done great things. From Mhow he took a departure in more senses than one when he was asked for by the officer commanding the 3rd Bombay Cavalry. A force had been ordered to march against Tantia Topee, the one leader of the Mutiny whose military talents had proved conspicuous, and who, as Sir William Hunter has well said, "had previously inspired Nana Sahib with all the capacity for resistance he had ever displayed." For a month Mr. Wood was continuously employed on harassing outpost work, and

then he commanded the advanced guard squadron of the 3rd Bombay Cavalry at the action of Rajghur, one of several districts and towns of the same name. At this action the rebels lost six-and-twenty guns. Six months afterwards his services were placed on record by Major-Gen. Michel, C.B., commanding the Malwa Division as follows:

"LIEUTENANT WOOD.

"ON marching from Mhow in August, 1858, the left wing, 3rd Bombay Cavalry, being deficient in officers, he volunteered to take charge of a squadron, and whilst in command was present in the action of Rajghur, where his squadron did excellent service. He also commanded these men at the actions of Sindwaho and Kurai."

But he had had the good fortune to attract the attention of the Viceroy even before General Michel's order was issued. He was mentioned favourably in the despatch of the Brigadier-General for his conduct at the fight of Sindwaho, and nearly a month before he was of age he had the Governor-General speaking of him thus in General Orders:

"*January 16th*, 1859.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Curtis, 1st Lancers (Bombay), in separate command during a portion of the day, brings specially to notice, &c. &c., as does Colonel De Salis, the gallantry of Lieutenant Wood of the 17th Lancers, who having from paucity of officers in the 3rd Bombay

Cavalry, volunteered, during the campaign, to command a troop of 3rd Light Cavalry on this occasion (action at Sindwaho) almost single-handed came up and attacked a body of the enemy."

Earlier still, he had the consciousness that his services were highly appreciated. Before he had been in the field two months, he had been appointed Staff-Officer to the column commanded by Colonel Benson, now Lieutenant-General Benson, C.B., Colonel of the 17th Lancers. And a month later he was made Brigade-Major to the force under Brigadier-General Somerset, a post which he doubled with that of Intelligence Officer, having charge of all duties connected with natives. He guided the column during a forced march of 176 miles, and began the new year well by bringing the force upon the enemy on January 1st, when the rebels were badly beaten. By the middle of April, Tantia Topee had been at last run to earth and captured, owing his end to a betrayal. Before Mr. Wood rejoined his regiment, now at Gwalior, he had marched some five thousand miles in the brief campaign; but a recognition such as was given him by his Brigadier was a reward that repaid him for all his toils. General Somerset wrote to the Adjutant-General:

"CAMP, PUCHORE,
"*April 15th*, 1859.

"SIR,

"Having this day received the Divisional Order, breaking up the Brigade under my command, I feel it a

duty to bring to the notice of the Major General commanding the Division, the name of a most deserving young officer, Lieutenant Wood, 17th Lancers, who has been my Brigade-Major since the brigade was formed on the 10th December, 1858, with whose previous services and conspicuous gallantry in action, the Major-General is already acquainted. It therefore only remains for me to say that in the various duties that have devolved upon Lieutenant Wood, as my only Staff-Officer, while under my command, he has shown the most unvaried zeal, particularly on occasions of the rapid pursuit of the enemy—calling for the utmost exertion from all—especially from one whose position did not admit of his taking advantage of the few short hours that others had for rest, as well as the highest intelligence and facility in the management of native Indians, quite unusual in one so lately arrived in the country. I have, therefore, to request that you will submit to the Major-General my strongest recommendation of Lieutenant Wood, as an officer of zeal and ability, whose past services have entitled him to consideration, and whose many good and high qualities especially fit him for employment upon the Staff of the Army or with Native Cavalry."

Yet it is but a few months since, at and after the Berkshire Manœuvres of 1890, people were talking and writing of Sir Evelyn Wood as a "mere infantry Officer;" General Michel knew better than that more than thirty years before, when he wrote to Lady Wood:

"MHOW,
"*June 15th*, 1859.

"MY DEAR MADAM,

"My only kindness to your son consisted in picking out one of my very bravest and best officers for active employment in the field; he has so far justified my choice, that I have been enabled to place him in the Irregular Cavalry, where his energy and talent will be sure to be appreciated."

And even in his own regiment he was looked upon as a fully qualified and trained cavalry officer, for before he had rejoined a month he had been sent to Bombay to receive from home, and train, recruits for the 17th. But he did not reach "the Fort." On his way through Mhow he was caught and at once sent off, on June 15th, to join, as Brigade-Major, General Beatson's Brigade of Irregular Horse at Aurungabad, one of eight towns called after the Emperor Aurungzebe, and identified as the place in the Nizam's Territory. Soon after he had taken up the appointment, and such an appointment was surely never before given to one of his age, General Beatson wrote to the Adjutant-General at Simla:

"I take this opportunity of thanking the Commander-in-chief for appointing Lieutenant Wood, 17th Lancers, as my Brigade-Major. In this officer I have a strong proof that it is not having passed a long time with native troops which alone renders an officer fit for

Irregular Cavalry. Lieutenant Wood's knowledge of his duties as a cavalry officer, his zeal and energy in all situations, render him more valuable as a staff-officer with Irregular Troops than most officers I have met in India, who have been all the period of their service with the native corps. I say the above irrespective of Lieutenant Wood's knowledge of the native languages, but in that respect also, though he has been only about eighteen months in India, he is superior to most officers who have been here ten years."

General Beatson's confidence in Mr. Wood's knowledge of the native tongues was justified a couple of months later, when he passed the Examination Committee in Bombay with flying colours. At the end of November the Brigade of Irregular Horse was broken up, and Mr. Wood, still a Lieutenant, and not yet twenty-two, was appointed commandant of the 1st Regiment Beatson's Horse. There were still about India bands of robbers, the waifs and strays of the Rebellion, well-armed, desperate, daring, and with abundant sympathisers in the native villages. Within four weeks he had distinguished himself in his new post. The story is so clearly told in the following despatch from Colonel Sir Richmond Shakespeare, Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, that it is only needful to cite the text:

"KULOOKEERA,
"*January 9th.*

"SIR—

"1. I have the honour to forward copies of letters, noted in the margin, from the Political Agent, Bhopal, and the officer commanding the 1st Regiment of Beatson's Horse.

"2. A band of robbers has for some time infested the jungles between Beora and Muksudnuggur. They have committed several depredations in the Barseah district, and have been frequently attacked by different parties.

"3. A Potail, of the name of Chemmun-Singh, has incurred their enmity by having given information regarding their movements. They contrived to capture this man, and carried him off to the jungle, where they intended to hang him.

"4. Lieutenant Wood, after a long march, arrived at Sindhora, a post held by his regiment, and there he heard of Chemmun-Singh's capture. He immediately started with a Duffadar and four Sowars of his own regiment, and a Naick and six Sepoys of the Bareilly Levy.

"5. After proceeding twelve miles from Sindhora, a fire was perceived in a dense jungle.

"6. Lieutenant Wood dismounted, and leaving three Sowars to hold the horses, advanced through the jungle on foot with the rest of the party. After walking three miles through very thick jungle they found themselves at 1 A.M. within twenty-six feet of the rebels.

"7. Four or five were awake, but all the rest, to the number of seventy, were asleep.

"8. Lieutenant Wood fired a volley, and rushed forward into the nullah amongst the rebels, followed by the Duffadar and Sowars of his regiment keeping well up with him. Several rebels were killed, the remainder fled, leaving their arms, and the Potail Chemmun-Singh was released.

"9. Had the Naick and six Sepoys (Bareilly levy) kept close to Lieutenant Wood, a greater number of rebels would doubtless have been killed; but to have released Chemmun-Singh under such circumstances will have an excellent effect, and Lieutenant Wood deserves the highest credit for his noble conduct in thus releasing him.

"10. I feel sure that the conduct of Lieutenant Wood, and that of the Duffadar and Sowars who accompanied him, will be noticed and rewarded by his Excellency the Viceroy."

Sir Richmond Shakespeare's anticipation that notice and reward would follow the report of this feat was justified. The Under Secretary to Government acknowledged the "gallant service rendered by Lieutenant Wood on this occasion;" but Lord Canning, whose administration had suppressed the mutiny, and whose wise display of mercy at the right moment earned for him the jeering epithet of "Clemency Canning," did more than acknowledge the service. He caused the story to be brought before the Queen, and the result is to be read in the *London Gazette*, dated from the War Office on September 4th, 1860:

"The Queen has been graciously pleased to signify her intention to confer the decoration of the Victoria Cross on the undermentioned officer of Her Majesty's Army, whose claim to the same has been submitted for Her Majesty's approval, on account of acts of bravery performed by him in India, as recorded against his name, viz., 17th Lancers—Lieutenant Henry Evelyn Wood—for having on the 19th October, 1858, during the action at Sindwaho, when in command of a troop of the 3rd Light Cavalry, attacked with much gallantry, almost single-handed, a body of rebels who had made a stand, whom he routed; also, for having subsequently, near Sindhora, gallantly advanced with a Duffadar and Sowar of Beatson's Horse, and rescued from a band of robbers a Potail, Chemmun-Singh, whom they had captured and carried off to the jungle, where they intended to hang him."

It is given to few to win and wear the proud distinction of the penn'orth of ribbon and penn'orth of bronze, and to fewer still to win and wear it after having four or five times earned it, and after being previously recommended for it in vain. And now that it had come, we may be very sure it was not so welcome as it would have been in the days when the ribbon would have been blue instead of red. My lamented friend Vice-Admiral Sir William Hewett was more lucky. He got the Victoria Cross for an act of bravery, surely not more notable than that for which Mr. Wood was recommended for it; and he lived to have it "recorded"

that he would have had it once more granted if he had not already possessed it. I do not recall another case in which two recommendations have gone forward for the same man save that of Major Beryman, 17th Lancers. And I know that to the day of his death Sir William Hewitt thought he ought to have had a bar on his bit of blue ribbon. Surely there should be some outward and visible sign of fortune or merit so rare as to win the Cross by a "double event." If that should ever be granted, Her Majesty will not fail to remember that Sir Evelyn Wood was deprived of the Victoria Cross (blue) because, as a mark of her favour, she had given him a commission in the Army!

And, before he got his Cross, he had showed that he was as conscientious as he was brave and energetic. He was a young lieutenant, put in command of a regiment, of which he was to make the best. It was in a very bad state, and early in March he reported so, recommending at the same time that it should be disbanded. A month later the condition of the regiment was recognised by the military authorities, but it was not until May-day that orders came to discharge the men he considered inefficient, and with the remainder to raise the 2nd Regiment of Mayne's Horse for service in Central India. This was scarcely done when, as the Seronge district was infested by fugitive bands of rebels and their sympathisers, the Supreme Government proposed to send thither two European battalions,

whereupon Sir Richmond Shakespeare wrote to the Government: "I assure you that I believe the services of those two officers, Lieutenants Bradford and Wood, will be of more avail in restoring order than any number of English soldiers." The Lieutenant Bradford here mentioned is none other than the present Chief Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis, and a contemporary of Wood at Marlborough. A finer testimonial no two young officers need wish for. But he who gave it was soon to virtually withdraw it in the case of one of them, on, as it would appear, rather insufficient information. Still, as the case may show young officers what they may have to take from "Politicals," it is worth citing in detail. I am honestly of opinion that the race of Politicals in India has very much improved. Soldiers have had, however, to bear a good deal from them even so recently as the Afghan days of 1878–9, and the Manipur disaster of last year might never have occurred had the political and the military power been concentrated in the same head. The experience of General Nott in Afghanistan showed him the impossibility of advantageously having "two captains of a ship." And there has been a tendency of late years to recognise this fact and to act upon the knowledge. Sir Richmond Shakespeare was indeed a colonel who had made a reputation in Central Asia, where he was reverenced for many a day as "Shiekh Sefeer" (see my old friend Dr. Wolff's "Mission to Bokhara," *passim*).

Sir Richmond had not, like Politicals of to-day, half the power taken out of his hands by officials at the far end of a telegraph wire, who, of course, always know all about everything a good deal better than the expert on the spot. He was virtually supreme, though there is a tradition of a living general, then far from "wires," who is said to have told a Political that if he attempted to interfere he would be put in irons and sent "down." The facts before us in the matter of Lieutenant Wood are as follows: In July 1860 Mr. Wood while patrolling in the Goona district, received an order from the Brigade-Major to go and arrest three rebels, two of whom were the late senior native officers of the regiment Wood had caused to be disbanded. The text of the order is important:

"The Commanding officer wishes you to go down at once and apprehend them by means of the Rajah himself; take him with you, and don't let them have a moment's notice. If you want more men let us know sharp, and how many."

Lieutenant Wood, being given to obeying orders, obeyed this one in the spirit in which it was given. He secured two of the three men, who were later sent across the "Black Water" to penal servitude in the Andaman Islands. But Sir Richmond Shakespeare was pleased to take exception to the "manner" in which the young officer addressed the Rajah, who was not

very willing to go rebel-hunting at "a moment's notice." He had to go, and that "sharp." So far Sir Richmond might have conceivably been in the right. He did not stop there. He went on to blame Mr. Wood for trying to take the Rajah with him in effecting the arrests. But on this point Mr. Wood had no more option than in moving at all. He was to go "at once," and he went at once, not after an interval of three days. He was told to take the Rajah, and he took him. What must have been his surprise when he found himself censured for obeying orders? We have since seen a senior officer rewarded for disobeying orders. "Kismet—it is Fate." The censure having been received through the proper military channel, Major Mayne, commanding Mayne's Horse, wrote the letter here given under date of August 7, 1860, and in reading it 'twere well to bear in mind that the subject of it was not yet twenty-two and a half years of age:

"SIR,

"I have the honour to inform you that, in obedience to the intention of your letter, I have communicated the contents to Lieutenant Wood, commanding 2nd corps, Mayne's Horse.

"2nd. Lieutenant Wood has in consequence sent in his resignation of his appointment, which I forward for your consideration. I have remonstrated with Lieutenant Wood, but he is too discouraged to remain under present circumstances.

"3rd. I greatly regret there has been cause for his incurring your censures, but it is my duty to report to you the essential services that this officer has rendered since he joined me, in carrying out the harassing details of organising the 2nd corps of my Horse. His unwearied energy; his close attention to details; his admirable temper; his strict discipline; the physical activity he daily exerts to teach his men the use of arms and horses; his unceasing intercourse with his officers and men; his unremitting endeavours to make himself thoroughly acquainted with their habits and language; his disregard of self and personal trouble, and the critical knowledge he has obtained of his profession, form a very long list of high qualifications.

"4th. But I have daily noticed them with intense satisfaction—I may say hourly—for from where I write I can see—hardly avoid observing—all that passes at Lieutenant Wood's quarters.

"5th. I have never met with an officer of Lieutenant Wood's age (not yet 23 years) who gave higher promise of making a brilliant soldier. His whole heart and soul are in his work; and he is an impersonation of Sir Charles Napier's *beau ideal* of an Irregular Horseman, for he is intent on his duty, in eating, drinking, and sleeping, while his gallantry and devotedness in the field have won for him the recorded praise of Lord Raglan, Sir William Peel, and all who knew him in the Crimea, where he was recommended for the Victoria Cross, and of all under whom he has served in India.

"6th. I beg that, strongly expressed as the above

character is, it may not be considered as over-estimated, for I believe that all who are intimate with and have studied Lieutenant Wood will accord him as high an eulogy.

"7th. Lieutenant Wood is much loved in the brigade, and I consider his resignation as a loss to the public service."

On the 28th September this passage appeared in Brigade Orders:

"HEAD-QUARTERS, GOONA,

"*September 28th*, 1860.

"Lieutenant Wood's earnest energy, his love for and knowledge of his profession, and his approved bravery mark him as a brilliant *sabreur;* and in raising the 2nd corps, and in service in the field, these have been conspicuous."

But this was not all. Colonel Travers, commanding the Brigade of Mayne's (or Central India) Horse, who had been told by Mr. Wood that he would have no objection to return to Central India in case of Sir R. Shakespeare's departure, wrote:

"GOONA,

"*October 4th*, 1869.

"MY DEAR WOOD,

"I am glad to find that you are thinking of returning to India and are anxious to join us again, for I enquired slightly, and was led to believe you had other views.

"If at any time a cavalry regiment under my com-

mand becomes vacant, and I can manage to place you at its head without injustice to others, believe me it will afford me sincere pleasure, and I shall esteem myself and the Government so far fortunate.

"Your untiring zeal, great patience, and tact are well known to me.

"I am not acquainted with any man who has stronger or better claims, or, with your professional abilities, would do it greater justice.

"I consider that you have great qualifications for such a command, and that you carry with you the respect and goodwill of all, having maintained strict discipline at the same time."

Lord Strathnairn laid the whole matter before Lord Canning, who replied that he should have no objection to Lieutenant Wood being employed again in a corps under the "Supreme Government." And, a little later, Lord Strathnairn told Mr. Wood at Benares that he would give him the first command of Irregulars vacant after his return to India. Now, see how slander lives! I was told on the Nile, with an ominous shake of the head, signifying there was a dreadful story behind, by a man who had spent a long time in India, but who, being now dead and gone, shall be nameless, that Wood had been very insubordinate in India, and had to be sent home. Here is the fearsome story of his insubordination, which reflects a great deal more credit on him than on the person who felt himself aggrieved, and

proved so incapable of appreciating that what he censured had been done in the most careful and prompt performance of the most explicit orders. And the story of his home-coming is no less clear even after the lapse of over one-and-thirty years. In October Mr. Wood was ordered to Calcutta to appear before a Medical Board. The records of such things do not readily disappear. Here is what is to be gleaned from the Report. Mr. Wood had now been two and a half years fighting and patrolling, resting, when he did rest, in bivouacs or under canvas, through three hot seasons and two monsoons. He was suffering from exposure and modified sunstroke and was accordingly invalided to England, not a bit the worse for Sir Richmond Shakespeare's censure, and having the satisfaction of carrying with him a copy of the following letter from Major-General Sir John Michel, K.C.B., to the Chief of the Staff:

"SIR,

"I have the honour to report that an officer of the forces under my command during the late operations in Central India, whose rank by the regulations of the service precludes him from general promotion, has so highly distinguished himself, and his services have been of such extreme value to the State, that I deem it my duty to bring these services to the notice of his lordship the Commander-in-Chief, in the hope that he may think fit to obtain from the Horse Guards such recognition of his services as will obtain for him brevet promotion, when

he has obtained his rank of Captain. The officer to whom I allude is Lieutenant E. Wood, 17th Lancers. His services under my command are as follows:

"On marching from Mhow in August, 1858, the left wing 3rd Bombay Cavalry being deficient in officers, he volunteered to take charge of a squadron, and whilst in command was present at the action of the Rajghur, where his squadron did excellent service; he also commanded these men at the actions of Sindwaho and Kurai.

"On the formation of a light column under Lieutenant Colonel Benson, 8th November, 1858, he was named Staff-officer, and was present at the different rapid pursuits under Colonel Benson and Colonel Somerset, and was present at the fight at Burode, on the 1st January, 1859. His extraordinary activity, zeal, energy, and judgment, together with his utility from having so rapidly passed in the Hindustani language, combine to render him a most valuable officer, and one whose services deserve reward, and whose promotion would be an advantage to the service."

Mr. Wood reached England three days after Christmas 1860, and on the next 16th April, became captain in the 17th Lancers by "purchase." This gave the authorities the chance of recognising the Indian services of the sailor-soldier. But they were slow to avail themselves of the opportunity. It was not until the 19th August, 1862, that Captain Wood became Major in the Army, or Brevet-Major, as the rank is called, he being still but a regimental captain in the Blue and

White Lancers. However, there he was, Major Wood, at the age of twenty-four-and-a-half.

There are two or three curious glimpses of his life to be found in a very scarce volume by Assistant Surgeon Sylvester, published in Bombay in 1860, under the title "Recollections of the Campaign in Malwa and Central India." Not once does the doctor mention the name of the youth of whom he writes so frankly. But the identity of the individual is unmistakeable. Describing the fight at Rajghur the doctor says after detailing General Michel's advance to ascertain Tantia's position:

"The position of his cavalry was discerned to be in line on a hill amidst much brushwood and jungle, and they in turn sent out two of their officers and about sixty troopers, who advanced down the face of the hill towards us, but as our small numbers did not admit of investigation, the General ordered a troop of the 3rd Light Cavalry forward in skirmishing order to drive them back. This was done by a cornet of that corps, whose ardour led him on some distance until he came in sight of one of the enemy's guns. Collecting seven or eight of the troopers nearest him, he made a dash at it and took it again; pressing on, accompanied by an officer of the 17th Lancers, and a few of the 3rd Bombay troopers who had been able to keep pace; when suddenly this zealous but small band emerged on an open plateau where the enemy had placed two pieces of cannon, two hundred infantry and about sixty Sowars. They opened

a volley of musketry, and about forty of the cavalry pursued, for our small party had been obliged to ride for their lives, and indeed the cornet was not very far in advance of a very long spear carried by one of the rebel horsemen, who seemed bent on making use of it; but luckily the sight of the Lancers, who had been steadily coming up, caused him and his fellows to rejoin their force."

A few days later, "the 3rd Bombay Cavalry were in support of two guns on the left and near a field of high jowaree, when they observed a body of the rebels emerge from it, who opened a galling musketry fire on the troopers and wounded several horses. The officer commanding retired them from their too close proximity, and the rebels formed into a rude square or gole, being composed of Bengal sepoys of the 36th Regiment and Velliatees. An officer of the Lancers doing duty with the 3rd Bombay Cavalry, on seeing them, attacked them singly and alone, commencing with a Velliatee, who chanced to be the corner man, while the others stood at the charge with musket and bayonet unwilling to move from their formation, in which they seemed to feel security. The Velliatee, having escaped the first blow aimed at him, drew a two-handed sword and made a furious onslaught; but as he in turn missed his aim he fell under the officer's charger, and was now in a fair way to be pinned to the earth, but rose again to the fight. At this crisis (and it was rather a serious one with the gallant young soldier who attacked them) a young trooper of the 3rd Bombay Cavalry charged to the rescue; the Velliatee immediately turned his

attention on him, and aimed a blow which grazed his back, severed the horse's crupper and part of the saddle, sinking deep into the spine of the animal. The trooper's well aimed blow clove the skull of the rebel. Three of the group now threw down their arms and shouted for forgiveness, but the next was for fighting and the officer now engaged him. He clubbed his musket with the bayonet fixed, and as he raised it to deliver a ponderous blow, the point caught in the drapery of his waist, delayed the descent of the musket butt, and at the same time exposed his chest to a thrust which ran completely through him. By this time the troopers of the 3rd Light Cavalry had arrived and finished the work so well begun."

But this young officer was not content with his serious work, so he must needs expend a portion of his superfluous energy in one of the "larks" he was fond of when *in statu pupillari*. Colonel Somerset and his Brigade-Major were on their way to act against Ferozeshah, who had crossed the Ganges to join Tantia in the Banswarra jungles. Passing through Jowra they were entertained by the Nawab, who, to again cite from Dr. Silvester:

"Is fond of, and possesses, good Arab horses, and a collection of rarer animals, cameleopards, lynxes, cheetahs, &c., and here a rather amusing scene presented itself. The Brigade-Major volunteered to ride the giraffe, and the Rajah had it brought out barebacked, the

bridle consisting simply of a piece of rope round the creature's neck. Vaulting from the balcony on to its back, the Brigade-Major started, at first at a spanking pace. . . . but when the giraffe attained his gallop, the movement actually induced a sort of sea-sickness in the daring rider, although four years' service in the Navy had rendered him proof against that malady at sea. Until thus affected, he rode like a centaur, while the beast's awkward bounds and gyrations caused great merriment. At length down came the rider, who first received a blow on the head from the knee, and then in the face from the giraffe's foot; it seemed to threaten a fatal termination. The Brigade-Major was borne away insensible, and did not recover for some hours."

The campaign was not to close without another misfortune for Mr. Wood; it is described as follows:

"At Barode a letter was found from a Jalraputtan official, which directed supplies to be laid in for Tantia and his force. It was evidently a document of guilt, as the Vakeel offered the Brigade-Major of the force a thousand rupees for it, saying it could be of no service to him. This sum and more was refused. Soon after this the natives played another trick to get possession of it; they robbed his tent of all it contained save his bed and himself, carrying away his clothes, four medals, and a number of *urzees* his moonshee had given him to read, to perfect himself in the Hindoostanee tongue; but the letter had been put for safe keeping in the field treasure chest, under a sentry, so that they again failed to obtain it."

CHAPTER III.

STUDY AND STAFF WORK.

Desk Work—A.D.C. in Ireland—An Essex Highlander—Another Exchange—Brigade-Major at Aldershot—After the Fenians—Good Practice—An "Help-meet"—Staff Promotion—Enters the Temple—Another Exchange—Wood with Wolseley—Selected for Active Service.

BEFORE Major Wood obtained even nominal field officer's rank he had long realised that in soldiering no man need hope to obtain eminence without hard work, not in the field only, but at the desk also. Even as a boy he had been a constant reader, now he resolved to read with a definite purpose. The result was that he decided to seek entrance into the Staff College—and in August, 1862, he successfully competed at the entrance examination. He joined in the following February. But, meanwhile, he had left the cavalry. He exchanged into the 73rd, or Perthshire regiment, now the Second Battalion of the Black Watch, to which he was gazetted on October 21st. He joined this fine battalion at Plymouth, and for a while, therefore, wore bonnet and kilt and sporran and plaid and claymore. At the Staff College Major Wood was distinguished for his assiduity

among a body of hard workers, but I do not find that he was very specially noted for success in any subject except Hindustani.

Towards the close of his period of study he received a very marked compliment. The Commandant of the Staff College became Major-General and was appointed to the command of the Dublin District, which then, and until quite recently, included the Curragh. Major-General Napier offered to Major Wood the post of aide-de-camp on his staff, and in January, 1865, he joined the general in Dublin. Those were not days of hard work in the army like these, yet Major Wood learnt a great deal from his brief experience with the troops in Ireland. And it was briefer than such opportunities usually are. For, early in 1866, General Napier was transferred to the charge of the Department of Military Education, and that is not a post to the holder of which an aide-de-camp is allowed. So Major Wood was once more returned to regimental duty, but not with the 73rd; to it he had belonged for more than three years, when he exchanged into the 17th (now the Leicestershire regiment). He was not without a certain reputation as a Staff-Officer already, and he was soon to increase it, when he was selected as Brigade-Major of the 3rd Infantry Brigade at Aldershot. So much was he soon thought of, that when the Fenian disturbances began in the South of Ireland in the autumn of 1866, he was picked out to be Staff-Officer to Sir Alfred

Horsford. It was here I first saw him—quiet, alert, indefatigable, often misled by the reports of the peasantry but pitting against their cunning a shrewdness very peculiarly his own. I remember that from the platform of Limerick Junction men could be seen drilling on the Galtee Mountains, but they had always vanished when troops went after them. I believe arms were generally concealed in illicit distilleries, the trade of potheen-making having been temporarily abandoned for the more attractive game of rebellion. The whole country was as much in the secret of one thing as the other. And it was even more difficult to tell where the arms were kept than where the vile poison was being produced from spoiled grain, since there was no thin wreath of "smoke that so gracefully curled" to tell that a still was near. But if the unlawful drillers were not to be caught—and I do not remember a case of their seizure—they yet came before long to recognise that the defiance of the troops could not be continued with impunity, owing to the watchfulness and the activity of the small flying columns that were organised, each as fully equipped for defence against a sudden attack as though it had been operating against Afridis on the North West Frontier of India or dacoits in Burmah. So far as it went the practice was excellent for a man destined to take part in so many "little wars." With the end of the dark days and the long nights came the end of the disturbances in Ireland, and Major Wood was

free to return to his duties at Aldershot, where he had not missed much, for those were not the days when nearly the whole of the winter was devoted to preparing for thorough training in the summer. From the time he joined our greatest camp he was a steady student of the phases of modern war, and he paid especial attention to the Bohemian campaign, which taught so many lessons in tactics, soon to lead to bloody results nearer home. But in the study he did not neglect the office. Perhaps he cannot, to this day, be considered a first-rate man of business, but he has an instinct in detecting a blunder, and he has a complete knowledge of routine, which has stood him for many a day in good stead. While he was Brigade-Major he took a step which makes or mars most men. When he was in Ireland he had fallen in love with one of Erin's fairest daughters, sister of Viscount Southwell, who became the Honourable Mrs. Wood at Ryde on the 19th September, 1867, her birthday. For four-and-twenty years, during which she bore to him three sons and three daughters, she was indeed "an help-meet" to her husband. There are some who go so far as to say she "made" him, but he alone can know how far her gentle wisdom inspired his life. For nearly a quarter of a century she was his better half in more than the conventional sense of the words, and, although she was a devout member of the elder branch of the Church Catholic, religion was not with her a matter for disputation with her Anglican

husband, but a thing to live for and up to. She taught her children to think liberally of forms of belief other than her own, and she was wont to declare that there was abundance of proof of a living faith among thousands of Protestants. To this day many a soldier and soldier's wife and bairns "rise up and call her blessed;" and indeed, when the moment came for disease of the heart to claim its victim, there was many a weeping woman at Colchester and at Aldershot who felt that more than Sir Evelyn had lost, "awhile," the best friend they had ever possessed.

Notwithstanding the brief holiday consequent upon this, one of the most blessed and happy of unions, there were some people at Aldershot who conceived the young Brigade-Major was far too active, and when, after a couple of years, he was promoted from Brigade-Major to the post of Deputy-Assistant-Adjutant General, which he assumed in November, 1868, there were not a few who thought he was likely to prove a thorn in their sides. He could not be idle. If he had not work he was always making it. And in default of drill during that winter, he set himself to a more thorough study of Military Law than had been required from him at the Staff College. This led to some study of our legal system and lore in general, and, in the end of April, 1869, he passed the prescribed examination and entered the Middle Temple as a student-at-law. In July he was staff-officer to the Wimbledon column, by Sir Alfred

Horsford's special request, and in the following year he became a substantive unattached major, but by purchase. Thus he had bought his three substantive steps from the time Lord Hardinge gave him his cornetcy. Altogether, it may be broadly said that, up till this time, he had put as much money into the army as he had taken out of it. Even his brevet step, eight years before, had done him no substantial good in the way of military advancement; but we shall presently find out that he owed something to the purchase system after all, since it raised him to a position in which future command became easily within reach.

Major Wood was chosen to be chief Staff Officer of the Wimbledon column in July, 1870. Such a record may seem trivial to those who do not know that there is scarcely any duty on which an officer can be put which gives more opportunity for tact and ability in dealing with men and officers than one of these little parade columns affords. General Lysons, name beloved by volunteers, under the endearing disguise of "Dodgy Dan," bore testimony to the fact that to Major Wood's "untiring energy and watchfulness the order and regularity of the column" were principally due. It was in the nature of the man from the first to act up to the Biblical injunction, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do do it with thy might." Sir Walter Scott puts into the mouth of Margaret of Anjou, in "Anne of Geierstein," a fine saying concerning two Englishmen attached to

her suite: "They are come from a country in which men are trained from their infancy to prefer their duty to their pleasure." In Sir Evelyn Wood, from first to last, we have an example of the working out of this principle. And, when we come to the one point in his career of which the army and the country have entertained a doubt, we shall find he was more sinned against than sinning; and that he even risked his reputation when once convinced that his duty at the moment required him to do so. In the spring of 1871 Major Wood appears in the new character of a surveyor. He was employed in Berkshire looking out for ground for manœuvres. Though nothing much came of the outing then, it bore fruit nineteen years later, and the Major was told by the Assistant-Quartermaster-General that his "sketches were very well done indeed and very well turned out in every way."

The opinion of his superiors of him, at this period of his life, cannot be better brought out than by citing the words of successive officers of eminence. General Sir James Yorke Scarlett, on taking leave of the Aldershot command, wrote to him saying "how thoroughly he appreciated his services, especially in the field, where they have been so useful." And when, some nine months later, there arose a question of the continuation of his appointment from three years to five, Sir Archibald Alison, then A.A.G. at Aldershot, and afterwards to command the camp in immediate ante-

cedence to the subject of his encomium, wrote to General Sir J. Hope Grant, commanding, concerning Major Wood:

"I believe I express your opinion of him, as well as my own, when I add that he is an admirable officer, equally good in the office as in the field; an excellent horseman, of great activity, has perfect judgment, and is fully qualified to undertake the duties when the Adjutant-General is absent. From his long experience of field services, and his thorough acquaintance with the ground in Berkshire, which he has recently been employed in surveying, I am sure he would be of the greatest assistance to you, on the staff, in the camp of instruction there, this autumn."

The recommendation was not agreed to, though such appointments have since been conferred for five years. And it was as well. For he went back to regimental duty for a time, having exchanged into the 90th Regiment, now the Cameronians, 2nd Battalion, in which Lord Wolseley served in the Crimea. He went to Salisbury plain as D.A.A.G. of the Army, under H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, thus getting a glimpse of Head-Quarters' work. He had joined the 90th in Scotland and accompanied it back to Aldershot in the July of 1872. Lord Wolseley was A.A.G. at Head-Quarters, and he wrote Major Wood how glad he was to have him with him in Dorset and Wilts. Thus began a connection which

continued for many a day to the satisfaction and credit of both officers. In January, 1873, Major Wood became a Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel by seniority, this being the first real fruits of his sums spent in purchasing previous steps. At the beginning of April he was made Commandant of the School for Auxiliary Forces at Aldershot, and in August was selected as D.A.Q.M.G. of the Army Corps assembled for manœuvres at Cannock Chase. While there he was warned by Lord Wolseley for service on the Gold Coast, and left the manœuvres on August 27th, proceeding by steamer from Liverpool on September 12th. As he went from Cannock he received a copy of Army Corps Orders, as follows :

"Major-General D. Lysons, C.B., with all his staff, regrets sincerely the departure of Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, V.C., D.A.Q.M.G., whose energy and great value as an officer have caused his selection for more important duties."

CHAPTER IV.

ASHANTI AND HOME AGAIN.

Off to Ashanti—The fault of the Dutch—A broken Reed—Frightened Fantis—Breaking the Spell—Harassing the Enemy—An Ashanti Panic—High Commendation—King Coffee's double face—Again wounded—The Advance on Coomassie—Whipping into Action—Two of the 90th—The C.B.—Called to the Bar—Honours and Offers—Away to South Africa.

FEW of our little wars have excited more interest among the people than the expedition which Sir Garnet Wolseley commanded for the punishment of the aggression of King Coffee Calcalli upon our Gold Coast possessions. It was not, perhaps, the value of our territory there which contributed in any degree to the feeling among the great bulk of newspaper readers. For, indeed, the Gold Coast has a very bad name among folks at home. And the climate is as bad as ever fancy painted it. There is only one European in the colony to every ten thousand natives. In fact, the Coast is unworthy the name of colony, but it is an important trading territory, and it supplies us with a very large quantity of raw material for our manufactures. Although we had a station there from the year 1618, and

were fully represented by an incorporated company as early as the year 1662, yet we and the Dutch had never precisely defined the limits of our land until 1868, when a separation of interests was effected. Of this England took little or no notice. It was an affair of administration, and went down pretty much as a matter of course. But this transfer led to very serious results. The Dutch had got on well with the Ashantis, in spite of the horrors of the local "customs," and the frequent massacres of human beings, for reasons half of superstition, wholly of savagery. In matters of commerce the fault of the Dutch has seldom been squeamishness. But every Sunday school child in England had been taught to look to Ashanti and Dahomey as contemporary illustrations of the "dark places of the earth, full of the habitations of cruelty," as King David put it. When the Ashantis, in what would nowadays be called the Hinterland, came to realise that they had lost their conveniently blind friends from the Netherlands, they did not like it. And they came to the conclusion that they could drive the few British into the sea. So they invaded the coast, and occupied a Protectorate of ours owned by a tribe called Fantis. They also blockaded our forts, or stations. This sort of thing not even a Government rapidly falling into decrepitude could well stand, and when news came that Colonel Festing, of the Royal Marine Artillery, had not without difficulty beaten back King Coffee's legions it was time to act.

And the Government acted with characteristic vigour! It appointed Sir Garnet Wolseley to the command of the troops (half a battalion of Marines) and it made him Administrator of the Gold Coast. It was not an appointment or a duty which most people would covet, and there did not seem to be any credit likely to be got out of it. But it was a mission of danger, and the post of danger is the post of honour. The General (local only at that time) would have had no difficulty in filling up a Staff to ten times the dimensions he had fixed upon in his own mind. And among those officers on whom he most depended was Lieutenant-Colonel Evelyn Wood, V.C., who left Liverpool on September 12th, and reached the Gold Coast on October 2nd, when he received the following order from Sir John McNeill, Chief of the Staff:

"I am desired by Major-General Sir Garnet Wolseley, C.B., K.C.M.G., to direct you to proceed to Elmina, accompanied by the officers specified in General Orders, for the purpose of raising a body of loyal natives for service against the Ashantees, at present invading the Protectorate of the Gold Coast."

Colonel Wood landed at Elmina the same day to take up his duties. He raised first of all a corps of coolies for transport, and organised an Intelligence Department. And before the 14th October he had got together a small native force which, if it did not cover itself with

glory in the whole of the campaign, was, nevertheless, good enough to march into the bush, in which the Ashantis trusted as much as to their own undoubted bravery, and inflict a defeat on the enemy at Essaman. The next morning he received from the General a letter containing the following passages:

"CAPE COAST CASTLE, 5·30 A.M.

'October 15th.

"MY DEAR WOOD,

"What hour did you get back last night? I watched you through a glass until you got close to the marines we left on the beach, and your movements looked so pretty that one might have thought them a strategic movement across the 'Long Valley.' . . . . I have to congratulate you upon the very able manner in which you did everything yesterday. I am very much obliged to you. The operations were well carried out, and all your previous arrangements were admirable."

Without entering into the history of this brief and brilliant campaign, it may be said that the original idea of Mr. Gladstone's first government was that, save a few marines and West India troops, the bulk of the force was to consist of native allies. These allies, mostly Fantis, were already known to be among the most cowardly of mankind, and it could have been with no great confidence that Lieutenant-Colonel Evelyn Wood and Major Baker Russell began to raise and drill two native regiments. Thanks to the co-operation of

Captain, now Sir, Redvers Buller, Captain Fremantle, R.N., Colonel McNeill (who was badly wounded in the arm), Captain Brackenbury, R.A., and Captain Crease, R.M., the attack on Essaman was a success, and in the opinion of Sir Garnet Wolseley was the turning-point of the war, as it broke the spell regarding the invincibility of the Ashantis in the bush. The Ashanti commander-in-chief decided to retreat. But in spite of the success at Essaman, it became clear that nothing could be done in an effective way without European troops. Wood's troops consisted of Cape Coast volunteers, and of men from Elmina, Kossu, and Bonny, very unpromising raw material. When the news of the Essaman success got home it was acknowledged by Mr. Cardwell, who wrote:

"I have had the honour of laying this despatch and the enclosure before the Queen, and have received her Majesty's commands to convey to you, and to Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, who, under your general direction, was in immediate command, Her Majesty's approbation of the able and gallant conduct of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men on that occasion. I observe with great satisfaction the terms in which you speak of the services rendered by Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, V. C. . . . ."

For ten days Colonel Wood was engaged in reconnoitring through the bush, and then he proceeded to the head of the road, but not before the Fantis had exhibited every variety of cowardice that might be

expected from previous experience. Meanwhile Sir Garnet was down with Coast fever, dangerously; and when he recovered he ordered an advance by Mansu. On the 27th November, Colonel Wood, who had been directed to harass the enemy, "to hang on his rear and attack him without ceasing," was pushing the enemy's rear-guard near Faisowah when his troops became unsteady, and his column of less than 300 natives was nearly surrounded. He retired and was followed five miles by the Ashantis. But then it was the turn of the latter to become panic-stricken, and they "broke up their camp and retired precipitately through the night with torches, scarcely stopping till they reached the Prah." The King wrote to Sir Garnet complaining of this attack on his retreating force, and adding that his troops "lost all their sick men and all their property," and the General replied:

"As regards the attack upon your retreating army at Faisoo, it was made only by a small party of my undrilled black troops, who were ordered to fall back as soon as they found where your army was; yet it caused the whole of the Ashantee army to retreat in the utmost haste and confusion, leaving their dead and dying everywhere along the path."

This picture was certainly not overdrawn, for the main Prahsu road was found strewed with the corpses of Ashantis, disease and starvation having decimated their

ranks more than the sword. The last verb in this sentence is decidedly inadequate to express the fact, if it be true that "of the 40,000 warriors who originally invaded the Protectorate at least one half perished." In spite of the cowardice of the native levies, and with the assistance of but a few marines and blue-jackets, the first phase of the war was brought to a satisfactory ending, and the General was not wrong in attributing the result to "the untiring exertions of the few carefully selected Staff and Special Service officers who" had accompanied him, and whose hard work, exposure, and privations had been so cheerfully endured for two and a half months before he wrote. In the same sense he further said to the Secretary for War, under date of December 5th :—

". . . . Of the special service officers, where all have worked so hard and so earnestly, it is no easy matter to particularise individuals. The two seniors, Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, V. C., and Major Russell, have each raised a regiment. . . . Lieutenant-Colonel Wood commanded at the engagement of Essaman, as mentioned in my despatch of the 15th October, in which I stated my appreciation of the manner in which he carried out the orders he had received. He is now commanding the advanced posts from Mansu to the river Prah, and displays both zeal and ability in the discharge of his duties. . . . . I have great pleasure in bringing the names both of Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, V. C., and Major Russell to your special notice."

And the General was not alone in his views, for the Commanding Royal Engineer spoke to the same effect:

"I have to request you will bring to the notice of his Excellency the Major-General, the great assistance I have received from Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, V. C., who has aided me in every way. Indeed I cannot express too strongly how much I am indebted to Colonel Wood for this assistance."

The help was very substantial which was thus handsomely acknowledged. Major Home has recorded one phase of it:

"The great difficulty at Prahsu was the want of hutting materials. On the south bank the palm-leaves were almost entirely deficient, and they had to be procured from the north bank of the river . . . . 200 to 300 men of Colonel Wood's regiment, with two or three European officers, were ferried across daily, to cut palm-leaves and stakes for hutting."

But this extract only tells a small part of the story how, on the arrival of the European troops, under Sir Archibald Alison as Brigadier, with Colonel Greaves as Chief of the Staff—"all that there was of a Chief of the Staff," as a great friend of his subsequently described him, with reference to a humorous affair in Cyprus—they found all the way from the coast to the Prah carefully constructed huts built by the native troops and labourers under Colonel Wood.

The General arrived at Prahsu in advance of the European troops on January 2nd, 1874, and by the 15th all was ready for the column, for which there were lying prepared a month's provisions for 3,520 fighting men and 3,000 carriers, in spite of continual desertions of Native allies. Negotiations which the General knew to be futile were carried on for some time with the Ashanti king, both before and after the crossing of the Prah by the force, between the 15th and the end of January, on the last day of which the savage "threw off the mask." The General advanced in four columns forming a sort of square, designed to meet the enveloping or outflanking tactics of the enemy. Colonel Wood commanded on the right, where he "encountered so heavy a fire that he directed his men to lie down." Of the fire the General himself confessed he had not known one heavier, so it is no wonder that before the action was won, which it was at a quarter to two in the afternoon, having lasted for some six hours, Colonel Wood was badly hit in the chest by a slug, and had to be carried several miles to the hospital. In a hurried despatch addressed to the Secretary of War the next day Sir Garnet Wolseley said:

"... My whole force divided into four columns ... Right column, Lieutenant-Colonel E. Wood, V.C.; Naval Brigade left wing, Wood's Regiment, Rait's artillery, two rocket detachments, Royal Engineers' detachment ... Up to 1·30 P.M. the enemy kept up a

very heavy fire on Lieutenant-Colonel Wood's column, whose right was extended into the bush, east of Egginassie . . . The officers commanding the columns performed their difficult task most excellently, and were efficiently aided by their staff. Lieutenant-Colonel Evelyn Wood, V.C. was wounded while at the head of the troops."

But though the slug wound was so severe, Colonel Wood managed to get out of hospital on February 3rd; and, though weak, he marched throughout the night, and overtook the General at 4 A.M. the next day, in spite of a "pitiless storm," a "deluge of rain which never ceased throughout the night." He was thus in time for the final action at Ordahsu, which threw open the path to Coomassie, and in this he took his place at the head of his Native regiment and led the advance.

In the following months, like his General, Colonel Wood returned to England, to find that his services had been fully recognised in the despatch sent by Sir Garnet from Coomassie on the day after the occupation of that blood-stained capital, in the following passage :

" . . . The two native regiments raised on the coast were commanded throughout the war by Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel E. Wood, V.C., 90th Light Infantry, and by Brevet-Major B.C. Russell, 13th Hussars. Both these officers have upon many occasions been placed in very difficult positions, requiring the exercise of high military qualities, and have invariably carried out their

very arduous and trying duties most efficiently. I take the liberty of bringing to your especial notice, as those upon whom the brunt of this war has fallen, these and the other combatant officers named below, who originally came out with me or followed me by the first mail steamer."

In June, 1874, Colonel Wood delivered before the United Service Institution a lecture on the Ashanti Expedition, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, now Lord Cranbrook, in the chair. This lecture gives a capital word picture of the campaign; but, as the chairman said, the lecturer had spoken of everybody's services rather than his own. Nevertheless, there is one passage from which a fair idea may be gathered of the difficulties that were overcome in the native material on which Ministers had originally intended to all but exclusively depend:

"On the 7th November, 1000 Cape Coast men, who had been directed by Colonel Wood to join him at Essecroom, arrived at Abrakampa, in order, as they said, to fight under the General's eye. At 2 P.M. they were paraded, facing the bush, and a more extraordinary battle array was never seen. In the British Army, corps quarrel for the position on the right of the line; here each company struggled for and edged away to the left, I imagine because it was the point further removed from the Ashantis. In front was a line of stalwart men, bigger than the Ashantis, all well armed with Enfield rifles. Behind them were their chiefs with whips.

Behind the Fantis chiefs, were Kossoos with drawn swords. When ordered to advance, the Fantis moved forward a dozen paces and then stopped. The chiefs belaboured all within reach, and the Kossoos menaced the most backward, including many of the chiefs. In time all but the kings were out of sight, and they showed no intention of venturing into the bush, till some Officers who were looking on, having been forbidden to go forward, used more than 'verbal persuasion,' to quote the words of a despatch; and, indeed, one gifted Officer used so much persuasion towards a chief as to spoil a strong umbrella. Yelling and firing, the Cape Coast men advanced as the ever-menacing Kossoos closed on them. Once in the bush, however, they were more at liberty, and, squatting down, they let the Abras pass to their right. These, on reaching Anismadi, the Ashanti camp, observed the last of Amanquatsia's army moving off. Not anticipating an attack, they had left much spoil and many slaves in camp, and several fell into our hands, though some were slaughtered in sight of the Abras, one Ashanti being shot while actually cutting a young mother's throat, a baby being on her back."

It is worth noting that, at this time, Sir Garnet Wolseley's substantive rank in the Army, though he had acted as Major-General in Ashanti, was "Major, half-pay, late 90th Regiment," and that Colonel Wood's similar rank was "Major, 90th Foot." On the last day of March he was gazetted Brevet-Colonel, and had a

Commandership of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath conferred on him. Within a month he was called to the Bar by the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple.

In the beginning of July he rejoined the depôt of his regiment at Hamilton, and little over two months later he was appointed Superintending Officer of Garrison Instruction for the United Kingdom, including Ireland. In the following August he served as A.Q.M.G. of General Herbert's Division in the Autumn Manœuvres, and on St. George's Day, 1876, he was appointed to the like post in the Aldershot Division. After more than a year of sound and useful work, he arranged the concentration of a so-called Army Corps in Windsor Park on July 9th, what time it appeared more than likely the said Corps would soon have to see foreign service in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea. General Sir Thomas Steele thanked him before Head-Quarter Staff for "the perfect arrangements of the day." In August, 1877, General Napier, Governor of the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, offered him the place of Commandant of that Institution, but the prospect of war prevented the acceptance of the post. A little later, the similar post at the Staff College was declined for a like reason. But Turkey was to be left to fight her foe unaided, and all hope of taking part in an Eastern Campaign was for the time being shattered, when the 90th Regiment was ordered to South Africa, and Colonel Wood, as its senior

major, resigned his Staff appointment to follow it, being employed on "Special Service" until the time came when he was ordered to take over the command. On the day after the Treaty of San Stefano was signed, he landed at East London, and nine days later was sent to command the troops near Keiskama Hoek, which was threatened by an attack from insurgent Kaffirs. Thus began a service in South Africa which was to prove alike interesting and important.

CHAPTER V.

IN KAFFIRLAND AND ZULULAND.

Restless Kaffirs—Clearing the Bush—A Skirmish—Cutting Tracks—Kaffirs "On the Jump"—The Chief Slain—More Commendation—Commanding at Utrecht—A Long March—Ketchwayo's Raiders—Discontented Boers—A Serious Responsibility—The right Thing to do—Boer Allies—A Mapless Region—Frontier Dispositions—Coercing Ketchwayo—An Independent Command—A Patrol at Midnight—Zulu Drill—Disaster at Isandhlwana—Position at Kambula—Buller raids—A Party Assegaied—A Careful Officer—A Plucky Sergeant—A Chief Submits—Wood Brigadier-General and K.C.B.—Zulus impressed—In the Morning Mist—Shot from a Cavern—A Narrow Escape—Sad loss—The Modern Troglodytes—A Costly Diversion—Boers and Natives desert—Zulu Advance—A Narrow Escape—A Fog Envelope—Zulu Hurry—Battle of Kambula—Ten to One—The Official Report—Heavy Zulu Loss—The Famous Flying Column—Approaching Ulundi—Total Defeat of Zulus—Compliments from Sir Garnet—The Rapture of the Fray—Presentations of Plate—Welcome Home—County Compliments—Dinner from the Bar—Regimental Colours—High Ideals—A Sad Mission—The Prince Imperial—Carey's Flight—Sixteen Wounds in Front—Funeral Honours—Belfast and Chatham.

It would be foreign to the nature of this volume to enter into any question of colonial policy in which its subject had not an initiative or controlling hand. But

it is necessary, for the sake of clearness, to trace the position of affairs from the time Colonel Wood landed at East London, which was the same day that the command of the troops in South Africa was handed over by General Sir A. T. Cunynghame to (local) Lieutenant-General the Hon. F. A. Thesiger, now Lord Chelmsford. For some time before this one of the periodical fits of restlessness had taken possession of the Kaffir and other tribes, and it had broken out into hostilities in or before February, 1878. The Transvaal had been annexed in 1877, and with it the country of Sekukuni, a chief of Basuto descent, but the most powerful feudatory of king Ketchwayo of Zululand. The Transvaal Boers had no real right to the country, and previous to the annexation Sekukuni had beaten the Boers badly. But even before any Zulu troubles arose there had been a brisk little war with the Kaffirs, ending with the death of the chief Sandilli. This man had given a great deal of trouble; and Colonel Wood was destined to take a prominent part in breaking his power. Five days after taking command at Keiskama Hoek he led a column of Regulars and Volunteers up the Quilli mountain, and for the next ten days was employed in clearing the Kaffirs out of the Peri bush. On the 28th March, in the words of General Thesiger:

"The enemy showed themselves in considerable numbers on the open ground between the Goza

heights and the precipice west of Haynes Mill; and I ordered an attack for the following morning. The combined movements of Colonel Wood and Commandant Frost were well carried out."

And this day there was a smart skirmish between Wood's mixed column and the enemy. The attack on the 29th did not lead to much more than another skirmish, so far as Colonel Wood was concerned, but what there was of it the general thus describes:

"The Kaffirs made an obstinate stand, and drove them (Fingoes), killing Captain Webster of this division while gallantly leading on his men. At this moment Colonel Wood's force . . . opportunely appeared on the high ground above the bush and effectually carried out its instructions."

The Kaffirs being driven off, Colonel Wood was employed until April 5th in the necessary but tiresome work of cutting tracks through dense bush. On that day the friendly natives searched the bush and reported it clear of foes. The next day he descended the mountain and had a skirmish at Burn's Hill, west of the Intaba Dodo river, and soon after he had the satisfaction of being joined by the headquarters and five companies of the 90th Regt., to the command of which he had succeeded at the beginning of the month. On the last

day of the month he had a serious fight. He commanded three columns, in all about 1,500 men, which attacked and defeated the Kaffirs in the Intaba Dodo bush, himself accompanying the right column, which had the most of the fighting. The General reported that:

"About 6. 45 A.M., heavy firing was heard from Colonel Wood's direction. . . . . The path by which this column had to advance was surrounded by dense bush, which completely screened the Kaffirs. . . . . By sunset the day's work had been satisfactorily concluded. . . . . Our loss, except Colonel Wood's right column, was slight."

On the 8th, Wood's column once more ascended the Goza heights, and had a skirmish at McNaughten's Kranz, Buffalo Range; while on the 12th, the Fingoes under his command had yet another skirmish, in accordance with the orders of the general "not to cease harassing the Kaffirs day or night." The general added "the officers in command are not likely to lose sight of these orders." Colonel Evelyn Wood was not likely to do so at any rate. From the 12th to the end of the month he was engaged in clearing the bush of the Buffalo river, and in searching for fugitives, the war being virtually at an end, as the General informed the Home Government on Waterloo Day, and even a week before. No hostile Kaffirs had been found in the

Buffalo Bush; but there was always a chance of further fighting so long as Sandilli, the head and front of the rising, was at large. He was slain in a skirmish on the 30th, and the rising immediately collapsed. The general reported of Wood as follows:

"From the 9th to the 29th May, the troops under Colonel Sir Evelyn Wood gave the rebels no rest. . . . Colonel Evelyn Wood, V. C., C. B., 90th Light Infantry, on special service in South Africa, has had command of a separate column of Imperial and Colonial troops, from the time that I assumed the direction of military operations in the field. I cannot speak too highly of the good service rendered by this officer. He has exercised his command with marked ability and great tact. I am of opinion that his indefatigable exertions and personal influence have been mainly instrumental in bringing the war to a speedy close. I would beg to draw attention to the names of those officers who are especially brought to notice by Colonel E. Wood."

On Midsummer day, Colonel Wood took command of a column which was ordered on a march of 510 miles from King William's Town to Natal by way of Pondo Land. He reached Maritsburg with the column on September 1st, having meanwhile paid a visit, on a political mission, to the town of Umfundisweni, in Pondo Land. Six days later he was appointed to the command of the troops in the Utrecht district, just over the border from Natal in the Transvaal, and his five

companies of the 90th regiment were to follow him, as the other companies were already there. It was on the 17th that he took up the command, and in view of troubles coming fast and thick, he proceeded two days later to Luneburg, where he was engaged for some time in the purchase of transport. Meanwhile Ketchwayo's men had destroyed all the Dutch homesteads from the river Pungolo to the river Pivan, the Zulu king having, as long before as February, instigated Sekukuni to make an attack on a chief named Pokwana, who was friendly to the English, and who was able, with a little help, to beat off the assailants. Captain Clarke, commissioner for the district, having remonstrated with Sekukuni, that chief replied that the English were afraid to fight, that the country was his, that the white people must leave, and that he was quite ready for war. [See Official Narrative of the Field Operations connected with the Zulu War of 1879.] The Boers also began to be restless, and to openly express discontent. The local forces being slightly strengthened, one of Sekukuni's chiefs was terrified into submission, but the great man himself was very active in opposition. And before he could be suppressed, Ketchwayo was ready to take the field in person, nominally on account of some disputed territory near the Blood river, but really because he had transferred to the British the detestation which he had nourished against the Boers, so that the Zulu war which followed was in fact a heritage which we took over in

connection with the annexation of Zululand. On October 1st the General wrote as follows to Colonel Wood:

"Sir Bartle Frere is very anxious to give some encouragement to the German settlers at Luneberg, who have sent him a petition pointing out the precarious position in which they are placed. I have told him that at present it will be quite out of the question to send them any troops; and I doubt much when the whole of the 90th are concentrated at Utrecht it will be prudent to weaken that garrison."

Yet two companies of the 90th were taken to Luneberg, Colonel Wood reporting his action and stating that unless the settlers were protected they would leave their station. To this despatch he received the following reply:

"You have taken a serious responsibility upon yourself, and I doubt very much whether you have acted wisely. However, you may depend upon my backing you up, as of course in your position you were bound to act in whatever way you considered necessary, under what I presume were very pressing circumstances."

The High Commissioner had no doubts on the matter, and Sir Bartle wrote:

"As regards Colonel Wood's advancement of a detachment to Luneberg, it is to my mind clear it was the right thing to do. . . . They appealed to Colonel Evelyn Wood for that protection which he was, as I conceive, as much bound to afford them as if they had been living in Pretoria. . . . I think he deserves our gratitude and acknowledgments for taking the responsibility of saving us from such a disgrace."

And later on he wrote to the Colonial Secretary as regards another raid:

"It will be in the recollection of Her Majesty's Government that this is by no means the first raid made by Umbelini, with the connivance if not under the orders of Cetewayo, in whose country he lives. It is simply a specimen of the horrors from which Colonel Wood saved the German settlers in the little town of Luneberg by sending a company of troops to their protection when threatened by Umbelini two or three months ago."

On the same subject Sir H. Bulwer, Governor of Natal, wrote of Umbelini's raid:

"About the same time, or a few days later, another kraal across the Pongolo, this time close to the Luneberg settlement, was attacked by his people, who killed men, women, and children. This act, following upon the notice given by the Zulu headman, Faku, caused a great deal of excitement among the German settlers at

Luneburg, and to reassure the settlement Colonel Evelyn Wood sent from Utrecht a detachment of troops to Luneberg, which had the effect of effectually stopping any further raid in that direction."

Lord Chelmsford himself admitted the effect of the act, and wrote that Colonel Wood had "done wonders with the Dutchmen;" and added, "I am quite sure the High Commissioner will be as much obliged to you from a political point of view as I am from a military one. At the same time Colonel North Crealock, Assistant Military Secretary, forwarded Colonel Wood a Minute from the High Commissioner:

"I shall be much obliged if His Excellency the Lieutenant-General will convey my thanks to Colonel Evelyn Wood for the judgment he showed throughout these proceedings."

In November our hero visited Andries Pretorius, an influential Boer, residing near Laing's Nek, in the Transvaal, to endeavour to induce him to join the British troops in the event of war with the Zulus. Early in December he convened a meeting of Dutch Boers at Utrecht, who promised to accompany him if necessary. On this Sir Bartle Frere wrote to the Home Government:

"I have but little doubt that the firm, conciliatory, and judicious treatment of these gentlemen by Colonel

Evelyn Wood will have an excellent effect, not only locally, but generally throughout the south-eastern Transvaal districts."

The frontier of Natal was about 200 miles in length, "divided into two nearly equal faces, forming a re-entering angle in the neighbourhood of Rorke's Drift." On the side of the Transvaal the country is comparatively open, and easily watched, but on the southern side Zululand is "broken and mountainous, and in many places covered with thick forests." These forests evidently furnished a screen behind which the Zulus could choose their rendezvous for a raid into Natal. It was therefore obviously wise to be beforehand with Ketchwayo, and, adopting the advice of the old Roman, "carry the war into Africa." No maps of the country existed, but at length the main routes were ascertained, and General Thesiger divided his force into five columns, with the object of marching on Ulundi, the king's principal kraal. Later on the number of columns was reduced to three, to advance simultaneously from the Lower Tugela Drift, Rorke's Drift, and Utrecht. The command of the first or right column was given to Colonel Pearson, commanding the second battalion of the "Buffs;" the centre column was confided to Colonel Glyn, commanding the second battalion 24th Regiment; and the left column was given to Colonel Wood, who was already on the spot at Utrecht. Be-

sides these columns there was to be a fourth, composed of friendly natives of Natal, for the most part, which was to move later on between the centre and the right columns. In the first days of January, Wood's column assembled near Balte Spruit, and "consisted of eight companies first battalion 13th Regiment, and eight of the 90th, four guns 11th battery, 7th Brigade, Royal Artillery, with the Frontier Light Horse, Mounted Boers and Wood's Irregulars, or a total of about 200 mounted men, 1,500 European Infantry, and 300 natives, with four guns and two rocket troughs." On the 4th January the column advanced to the Blood river. On the same day Sir Bartle Frere, the High Commissioner, handed over to the general—now become Lord Chelmsford, by the death of the fine old gentleman who, having been, like Colonel Wood, a midshipman, had attained the dignity of Lord Chancellor—the task of coercing Ketchwayo, unless he agreed to the British terms by the 11th of the month. On the 6th the Blood river, though in flood, was crossed, and on the 10th, Bemba, the chief of the district, submitted, and was sent with his people to Utrecht. On the same day the concentration of each of the three columns was completed. For the moment it appeared that Wood's column had the best of the country, which was more open than that before the other columns. But he was not to have a free hand, for danger being supposed to lurk more especially in front of Glyn's centre column,

Wood, 35 miles off, was to keep himself in readiness to hold out to him a helping hand. Accordingly, on the 10th, Colonel Wood started down the left of the Blood river, an affluent of the Buffalo, and at once found himself in a very difficult country. He had two guns, six companies 90th, and six companies 13th, with most of his mounted men, and two battalions of friendly Zulus known as Wood's Irregulars. The ground was for the most part marshy, and numerous small streams had to be crossed, their banks being previously cut down. Nevertheless, in four hours no less than 9 miles had been covered, and then the column halted for the night, or rather till 2 in the morning of the 11th, when the march was resumed in "darkness and fog." First went a flying column, under the Brigadier, composed of the Frontier Light Horse, two guns, 24 marksmen in mule waggons, 600 of Wood's Irregulars. The remainder, under Lieutenant-Colonel Gilbert, went in support at a distance of several miles. The flying column made nine miles, and got within twelve of Rorke's Drift by eight o'clock, when Lord Chelmsford was met. The general, having seen the centre column safely across the Buffalo without opposition, had ridden out with an escort to meet the left column. The news he brought rendered the further advance of Colonel Wood unnecessary. He accordingly returned to the camp at Bemba's Kop, but owing to heavy rain did not reach the camp until the morning of the 13th. This operation, though as it

turned out useless in a direct sense, had two advantages. It accustomed the troops to the presence of the Zulus, who, though not yet actively hostile, were in the bush in great numbers, and it provisioned the force by the capture of many head of cattle. Of the state of the command Lord Chelmsford wrote on January 14th to the Secretary of State for War:

"I was completely satisfied with the account Colonel Wood had given me of the efficiency of his column, with respect to its transport and commissariat and its ability to move forward at once. I attribute the satisfactory state of the column to Colonel Wood's energy and military knowledge."

And on the same date Colonel Wood was appointed Political Agent in Northern Zululand, while a day or two later he was, in Lord Chelmsford's words:

"Instructed to act altogether independently. . . . He will take up a position covering Utrecht and the adjacent Transvaal frontier wherever he considers his force can be most usefully employed."

Reconnaissances were made on the 15th and 17th by the mounted troops, and on the 18th the column advanced ten miles eastwards to the Sand river, or Insegene, the Irregulars, in advance, having a slight skirmish on the eastern side of the White Umvalosi river, which further on runs down three miles to the south of Ulundi. After a day's halt, if not absolute rest,

the column moved on the 20th to the White Umvalosi, near the kraal of a chief named Tinta, who promptly submitted; and was sent to Utrecht under escort. A reconnaissance made to the top of a table-mountain in the Zungi range was warmly received by the enemy and had to retire. On the next day a strong stone laager fort was completed and the stores moved into it, under the guard of a company from the 13th and one from the 90th regiments. That midnight a patrol, in three sections, one under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Buller, and another under Colonel Wood, set out for the Zungi range, and gained the ridge unopposed at 6 A.M. The force united and passed to the eastern end of the range, having on the way discovered the Zulus drilling on the central eminence, called the Inhlobana mountain, to the number of about 4,000 men. "Their evolutions, which were plainly visible with the aid of a glass, were executed with ease and precision, a circle, a triangle, and a hollow square with a partition across it, being formed rapidly by movements of companies." Evidently here were foemen, though savages, not unworthy of British steel. The force now descended the mountain, and at 7 P.M. gained a camp which had been formed by Lieutenant-Colonel Gilbert below the south-eastern extremity of the range. A halt on the 23rd was followed on the morning of the next day by an advance, when, at half past 7, a body of Zulus was met and defeated north of the Inhlobana mountain. While this

skirmish was in progress the news reached Colonel Wood of the disaster to the centre column at Isandhlwána on the 22nd, when "52 officers, and 806 white non-commissioned officers and men were killed," besides 200 to 300 native troops, and the Zulus "became possessed of two 7-pounder guns with their ammunition, and of about 800 Martini-Henry rifles, with some 400,000 cartridges." In consequence of this reverse Colonel Wood acted prudently and well by at once falling back on his camp on the White Umvolosi at Fort Tinta.

Colonel Wood remained at Fort Tinta the day of the 26th, loading up the burdens of twenty waggons, and on the 26th marched nine miles towards the 'Ngabaka Hawane mountain, twenty miles to the east of Utrecht. But he was in no hurry to fall back faster than was needed, so he halted from the 27th till the 31st on the White Umvalosi, and only then proceeded a short distance further to a good position at Kambula, on the south-eastern side of the mountain, where water and wood were plentiful and where he established a strong entrenched camp. Next morning Colonel Buller took about 140 mounted men to the Makulusini kraal, thirty miles or more to the eastward, this kraal being "a centre of resistance and a rallying point" for the most hostile natives. He got there at half-past twelve, having been over eight hours on the road. He had guarded his line of march by leaving thirty men in the pass, and with the rest he advanced into the basin of the hills,

and galloped up to the kraal, from which the "Zulus fled in all directions." The kraal of 250 huts was burnt, some cattle were captured, and the party got back the same evening to Kambula without loss. Such is often the result of happy audacity. The Staff map makes the burning of the kraal take place on the 2nd of February, but the Official History leaves no doubt it was on the 1st. On the 3rd the Fort at Kambula was finished, and armed with two guns; and from the 5th to the 7th two parties went scouting about in search of Zulus, but found none. They returned from their vain search on the 7th, and on the 10th Colonel Buller was out again eastward to his old ground on the Inhlobana mountain, where he got 500 cattle without "any serious resistance." From considerations of transport for wood, the fort was on the 13th moved two miles nearer the mountain summit, and on the same day Buller went off to punish a chief named Manyanyoba who was raiding the Intombi valley, near Luneberg, and although this chief had been joined by Umbelini, the Zulu who had ordered the Germans away from their farms the previous September, and had in February committed a number of murders in this valley, the Zulus were routed out of the caves in which they took refuge, and slain to the number of thirty-four. Some cattle were taken. Other raids were made by a force under Colonel Rowlands, V.C., without much result, and on the 26th that officer was despatched to Pretoria in consequence of the attitude of the Boers,

so that Colonel Wood remained in sole charge of the district. On the 17th Uhamu, a half-brother of Ketchwayo, offered to surrender, but was unable to do so until the 4th March, when he was brought in with 700 followers. Before he reached Luneberg, a company of the 80th Regiment was sent out under Captain Moriarty, to escort a convoy of waggons with supplies to Luneberg from Derby. It met some of the convoy on the Intombi river, and there formed laager, where it was inspected the night of the 11th by Major Tucker. At four o'clock on the morning of the 12th, a sentry was fired at, and the laager on the left bank was rushed, with disastrous results, Moriarty and most of his men being assegaied as they left their tents. A party on the right bank, under the command of one Lieutenant Harward, opened fire, but in the face of it 200 Zulus got across the river, whereupon the gallant Harward bolted on horseback, as hard as he could pelt, in the direction of Luneberg, four and a half miles off, to "procure reinforcements," leaving his detachment without an officer. However, there was a plucky sergeant, named Booth, who was equal to the occasion, showed a bold front to the Zulus, and brought his band off without loss. Mr. Harward was court-martialled, but was acquitted, yet did not escape such a "wigging" at the hands of Lord Chelmsford and the Commander-in-Chief at home, that his combatant career soon came to a close.

Uhamu's surrender was of some value, and much was thought of it at the time by the superior authorities. Sir B. Frere said in a despatch :

"Much credit is due to Colonel Wood and to Captain Macleod, who acted under his orders, for the temper, judgment, and patience they have shown in their dealings with Uhamu. There were at first the gravest suspicions in the minds of persons claiming more than an ordinary knowledge of Zulu affairs as to whether Uhamu was not, in Ketchwayo's interest, devising a scheme to entrap Colonel Wood. There is no doubt but that this defection from Ketchwayo is in every way an event of considerable importance."

And Lord Chelmsford said :

"It will be within your recollection that Colonel Wood for many months past has reported his belief that this important chief would separate himself from the King when opportunity offered, and Colonel Wood has always treated the natives of Uhamu's district, when it was possible to do so, in a manner which would induce them to join, as Uhamu."

Colonel Wood's own report ran :

"Uhamu came in as reported on the 10th inst., and having requested me to get in his wives and family, I sent off on the 12th inst. twenty of his men to en-

deavour to collect his people. Early on the morning of the 14th a party consisting of 360 rifles under Lieutenant-Colonel Buller, C.B., 30 burghers under Piet Uys, and 200 men of Uhamu's under direction of Mr. Lloyd left this camp. Lieutenant-Colonel Buller, C.B., was in command of the patrol. I accompanied the patrol in order to see the country, and because I considered my presence would be an inducement to Uhamu's men to accompany, as the latter has begged me to look on his men as my "dogs." Leaving the camp at 5 P.M. on the 14th, we reached the caves near Inhlangawine Inambruid, twelve miles to the east of the sources of the M'Kusi river, and about forty-five miles from this camp, at 9·30 P.M. The last seven miles occupied three hours, as we had to cross a very difficult hill. We started back at about 9 A.M., and reached the Zunguin range on the evening of the 15th inst. A few shots were fired at us from the Inhlobane range. The position is stronger and more difficult to take than I anticipated. I have now returned to camp at 1 P.M., bringing with me 958 souls of Uhamu's people."

The Special Border Agent, at Umvoti, reporting on an interview with some Zulus said :

"One of them at a private interview told the Bishop and myself confidentially that the change in Cetewayo's tone is principally caused by the defection of Uhamu. They perceive plainly it is the beginning of the break up of the Zulu power."

Sir B. Frere wrote:

"I have in other despatches expressed my sense of the importance of Uhamu's defection from Cetewayo, which I entirely concur with his Excellency Lord Chelmsford in thinking is mainly due to the judicious management of Colonel E. Wood and Captain Macleod."

And Lord Chelmsford was not less emphatic:

"I congratulate you upon Uhamu's surrender—the whole credit I consider lies with you."

In consequence of this, following upon so much distinguished service, the General asked that the local rank of Brigadier-General might be conferred on Colonel Wood, which request was granted by the High Commissioner on the 3rd April, ere a despatch from him reached home with this passage:

"Before active operations recommence for further advance in Zululand I wish to bring to the special notice of Her Majesty's Government the great value of the services performed by Colonel Evelyn Wood, in command of the 4th column, and Colonel Pearson, of the 1st column of the forces now in the field.

"2. His Excellency Lieutenant-General Lord Chelmsford has, I am sure, very fully reported on the military bearing of their operations in Zululand. What I would now specially bring to the notice of Her

Majesty's Government is the political effect of their steady maintenance of positions so far advanced into Zululand as to render an invasion of Natal by the Zulu army in force an operation of extreme peril.

* * * *

"But I should place foremost in the list of causes the undaunted bearing of the two columns commanded by Colonels Wood and Pearson, and I beg warmly to recommend the conduct of both officers for the special approbation of Her Majesty's Government."

And the effective instrument of the promotion read thus in General Orders of April 8th:

"His Excellency the High Commissioner has been pleased to approve of Lieutenant-Colonel and Brevet Colonel Wood, V.C., C.B., 90th Foot, holding the local rank of Brigadier-General while employed in command of a brigade in South Africa. Dated 3rd April, 1879."

The Queen, on the 23rd June, gave effect to the wishes of the High Commissioner by appointing Colonel Wood a Knight Commander of the Bath.

For some time it had been rumoured that Ketchwayo was bent on throwing his whole army on Wood's column, which a Frenchman named Grandier, who escaped from Ulundi, reported to be the "only commando" the Zulus were afraid of. The Border Agent at Umvoti reported to the same effect, and thought Wood might have to encounter as many as 25,000 men. He

added, "The Zulus are much impressed with the skill with which this force has been handled, and are afraid it may push on for the Inhlazatze and threaten the Royal kraal. Bishop Colenso heard that the whole army would probably be sent "to try and overwhelm Colonel Wood's column." Even as early as January 28th Lord Chelmsford wrote Wood: "You are now forewarned, and must be prepared to have the whole Zulu force on top of you one of these days."

Between the 14th and 18th of March, Colonel Wood accompanied Colonel Buller on an expedition to bring in a number of Uhamu's men who were hiding from the Zulus in caves on the Umkusi river, forty-five miles east of Kambula. As many as 958 were thus brought in, with little opposition, but something else was done; it was found out that the southern side of the Inhlobana mountain was occupied by from 800 to 1000 of the enemy. This led to a reconnaissance, when Lord Chelmsford announced an intention of marching to the relief of Etshowe, and asked that a diversion should be attempted on March 28th. A movement was accordingly made against both ends of the mountain, the eastern under Colonel Buller, the western under Colonel Russell. The former had 300 mounted men and 400 natives, and after a march of thirty miles, bivouacked five miles from the south-east of the mountain. The latter had 250 mounted men, a rocket detachment, a battalion of Wood's Irregulars, and 150 of Uhamu's men. After a

march of fifteen miles, he bivouacked four miles west of the mountain. Colonel Wood with his Staff, consisting of Captain the Honourable Ronald Campbell, Mr. Lloyd, political assistant, and Lieutenant Lysons, as orderly officer, reached Russell's bivouac on the night of the 27th, and went eastward at half-past three on the morning of the 28th. Buller left his bivouac at the same time and crept, with the utmost difficulty, though shielded by the morning mist, up a steep path, "hardly passable for mounted men" in a re-entering angle of the mountain, to the summit, which could not have been gained in the face of serious opposition. Although the Zulus on the top were surprised, they stood to their weapons, killed two officers, and mortally wounded one man. Colonel Wood, who had just received the news that he had been awarded the grant of £100 a year for distinguished service, dismounted, and was leading his horse up the steep slope, with his Staff and a small escort, a little ahead of some men under Colonel Weatherly, when, in the words of the Official Report:

"At a short distance from the top, a severe and well-directed fire was opened on the party from some holes in the rocks above. By this fire, Mr. Lloyd was mortally wounded, and Colonel Wood's horse was killed, and as these and other casualties appeared to be caused by shots from one cavern in particular, Colonel Wood

ordered Colonel Weatherley to send some of his men to the front to dislodge the Zulus from this hiding-place. As there was some little delay in obeying this order, Captain Ronald Campbell dashed forward, followed by Lieutenant Lysons (known throughout this campaign as 'the boy'), and three men of the 90th, but just as they reached the dark entrance of the cavern, Captain Campbell fell dead, shot through the head by a Zulu lying hidden within. His death was speedily avenged by his companions, and the cavern was cleared."

Colonel Wood saw Campbell and Lloyd buried lower down the slope, while Buller cleared the summit of the mountain, three miles in length by half that distance in width, collecting two thousand head of cattle. Soon afterwards, Buller saw a Zulu army about six miles off, estimated at 20,000 strong, coming from the south-east. About an hour later, Wood saw the Zulu army, and ordered Russell to get into position on the Zunguin Nek. There was some difficulty in identifying the spot, and Russell took up a position six miles from the place intended. Buller went down the west side of the mountain, harassed by natives from the caves, and the Zulus closed with the assegai on the scattered members of the party. "One officer and about sixteen men were lost, and at this spot fell Mr. Piet Uys, the gallant leader of the Boer Contingent, who had rendered such valuable services to Colonel Wood's column." Buller's troops got greatly disorganised, and would probably

have been cut to pieces, had the Zulu main body attacked. As it was, the small loss sustained was mainly at the hands of the inhabitants of the mountain, the modern Troglodytes. The expedition got back to Kambula camp with less loss than might have been expected. But Wood had assuredly created a diversion for the General. He sent Lord Chelmsford this telegram:

"We assaulted the Inhlobane successfully yesterday, and took some thousands of cattle; but while on the top, about 20,000 Zulus, coming from Ulundi, attacked us, and we suffered considerable losses, the enemy retaking captured cattle. Nearly all our natives deserted last evening."

Colonel Wood's report of this affair was as follows:

"I have the honour to report that the Inhlobane mountain was successfully assaulted and its summit cleared at daylight on the 28th by Lieutenant-Colonel Buller, C.B., with the mounted riflemen and the 2nd battalion Wood's Irregulars, under the command of Second Commandant Roberts, who worked under the general direction of Major Leet, commanding the corps. I joined Colonel Russell's column at dusk on the 27th inst., at his bivouac about five miles west of Inhlobane mountain. I had with me the Hon. R. Campbell, district staff officer of No. 4 column, Mr. Lloyd, my political assistant, Lieutenant Lysons, 90th Light Infantry, orderly officer, and my mounted personal escort,

consisting of eight men 90th Infantry, and six natives under Umtonga, one of Panda's sons. Soon after 3 A.M. I rode eastward with these details, and at daylight got on Colonel Buller's track, which we followed. Colonel Weatherly met me, coming westward, having lost his way the previous night, and I directed him to move on towards the sound of the firing, which was now audible on the north-east face of the mountain, where we could see the rear of Colonel Buller's column near the summit. I followed Colonel Weatherly and commenced the ascent of the mountain immediately behind the Border Horse, leading our horses. It is impossible to describe in adequate terms the difficulty of the ascent which Colonel Buller and his men had successfully made—not without loss, however, for horses killed and wounded helped to keep us on his track where the rocks afforded no evidence of his advance. We soon came under fire from an unseen enemy. Ascending more rapidly than most of the Border Horse, who had got off the track, with my staff and escort, I passed to the front, and, with half-a-dozen of the Border Horse, when within a hundred feet of the summit, came under a well-directed fire from our front and both flanks, poured in from behind huge boulders of rocks. Mr. Lloyd fell mortally wounded at my side, and as Captain Campbell and one of the escort were carrying him on to a ledge rather lower, my horse was killed, falling on me. I directed Colonel Weatherly to dislodge one or two Zulus who were causing us most of the loss, but as his men did not advance rapidly, Captain Campbell, Lieutenant Lysons, and three men of the 90th, jumping over a low wall,

ran forward and charged into a cave, where Captain Campbell, leading in the most gallant and determined manner, was shot dead. Lieutenant Lysons and Private Fowler followed closely on his footsteps, and one of them, for each fired, killed one Zulu and dislodged another, who crawled away by a subterraneous passage, reappearing higher up the mountain. At this time we were assisted by the fire of some of Colonel Buller's men on the summit. Colonel Weatherly asked for permission to move down the hill to rejoin Colonel Buller's track, which he had lost, and by which he later gained the summit without further casualties. At this time he had lost three dead and about six or seven wounded. Mr. Lloyd was now dead, and we brought his body and that of Captain Campbell half-way down the hill, where we buried them, still being under fire, which, however, did us no damage. I then moved slowly round under the Inhlobane mountain to the westward to see how Colonel Russell's force had progressed, bringing with the escort a wounded man of the Border Horse and a herd of sheep and goats driven by one of Umtonga's men. We stopped occasionally to give the wounded man stimulants, unconscious of the fact that a very large Zulu force was moving on our left across our front. We were about half-way under the centre of the mountain when Umtonga saw and explained to me by signs that a large Zulu army was close to us. From an adjacent hill I had a good view of the force. It was marching in five columns with "horns," and dense "chest," the Zulu normal attack formation. The Ulundi army being, as I believe, exhausted by its rapid march, did not close on

Colonel Buller, who descended after Uhamu's people the western point of the mountain.

* * * * * *

"We reached camp at 7 P.M., and Colonel Buller, hearing that some of Captain Barton's party were on foot about ten miles distant, at once started in heavy rain with led horses and brought in seven men, as we believe the sole survivors of the Border Horse and Captain Barton's party, who, being cut off when on my track, retreated over the north end of the Ityenteka Range."

During the night of the 28th, all Wood's Irregulars deserted, and early in the morning all the Dutchmen left the camp. Spies brought information that the whole Zulu force was marching on Kambula camp, but as it was short of fuel a party was sent up the mountain. A dense fog enveloped the camp, and when it lifted, at ten o'clock, the Zulu army was seen in motion. Without undue haste the wood party was recalled, dinners quietly ordered for half-past twelve, after which the tents were struck. This act appeared to the Zulus as preparatory to a retreat, so they hastened their attack, the advance having previously been deliberate. But the proverb has it that "more haste makes worse speed." And the Zulu hurry enabled Wood to defeat one wing before the other came into action. There were at least 20,000 of Ketchwayo's lieges, and all the force Wood had to dispose of was the 90th Light Infantry, a battalion of

the 13th Light Infantry, and the battery with a few mounted men, the total being 1,998. Thus there were more than ten Zulus to each man in laager or in the outlying fort two hundred yards to the eastward. This fort at its western end was connected by a palisade sixty yards long with a cattle laager lying south on the brow of a steep bluff. The fort was occupied by companies of the 13th and 90th. Dinner being got over—but to avoid repetition, it is better to cite Colonel Wood's report:

"The camp was vigorously attacked by four Zulu regiments from 1·30 to 5·30 P.M. The chief command was exercised by Mnyamane, who did not come under fire, and Tymgwayo. The army left Ulundi on the 24th inst; four regiments were left near Ekowe and four left at Ulundi. Early in the forenoon Captain Raaff, who was out reconnoitring, sent me one of Oham's men. He told me he was behind with the captured cattle. He put his head badge into his pocket and was recognised by a friend who was ignorant of his having joined us. He marched with the Zulu army to the Umvolosi. At daybreak he went out drinking and persuaded his companions that they were recalled, ran away to Raaff's men, and told them how the attack would be made at dinner-time. About 11 A.M. we saw dense masses approaching, moving in file, towards the Inhlobane mountain from near the Umvolosi. Two companies which were out wood-cutting were recalled, the cattle brought into laager with the exception of about 200 which had strayed away from those whose

duty it was to herd them, in the direction of the natives. At 1·30 the action commenced. The mounted riflemen under Colonels Buller and Russell engaged an enormous crowd of men on the north side of the camp. Being unable to check them, the men retired inside the laager followed by the Zulus until they were within three hundred yards, when their advance was checked by the accurate firing of the 90th Light Infantry, and the Zulus spread out to front and rear of camp. The attack on our left had slackened, when, at 2·15 P.M., heavy masses attacked our right front and right rear. The enemy, well supplied with Martini-Henry rifles and ammunition, occupied a hill not seen from the laager, and opened such an accurate fire, though at long ranges, that I was obliged to withdraw a company of the 13th Regiment at the right rear of the laager. The front, however, of the cattle laager was stoutly held by another company of the 13th. They could not see the right rear, and as the Zulus were coming on boldly, I ordered Major Hackett of the 90th Light Infantry with two companies to advance over the slope. The Zulus retired from their immediate front, but the companies being heavily flanked I ordered them back; whilst bringing them in Major Hackett was dangerously, and as I fear, mortally wounded. The two mule guns were admirably worked by Lieutenant Nicholson, R.A., in redoubt, until he was mortally wounded. The horses of the other four guns, under Lieutenants Bigge and Slade, were sent inside the laager when the Zulus came within 1,000 yards of them, but these officers, with their men and Major Tremlett, R.A., to all of whom great

credit is due, remained in the open the whole of the engagement. In Major Hackett's counter-attack Lieutenant Bright, 90th Light Infantry, an accomplished draughtsman and a most promising young officer, was wounded, and died here during the night. At 5·30 P.M., seeing the attack slackening, I ordered out a company of the 1-13th Regiment to the right rear of the laager to attack some Zulus who had crept into the laager, but who had been unable to remove the cattle. I took Captain Laye's company of the 90th Light Infantry to the edge of the krantz on the right front of the cattle laager, and they did great execution among a mass of retreating Zulus. Commandant Raaff at the same time ran on with some of the men to the rear of the camp and did similar execution. I ordered out the mounted men, who, under Colonel Buller, pursued for seven miles the flying Zulus retreating on our left front, chiefly companies of the Amaqulosi under Umcwayo, killing great numbers, the enemy being too much exhausted to fire in their own defence. From those we have taken, it appears that the column first attacked our left, and then, being repulsed, went round to our front. Rear and right were composed of the Nokeuke and Umbonambi and Unkandampenvu regiments. The Amaqulosi attacked the front, the Ulundi and Umcityu the right front, and the Ngobamokosi the right. We are still burying Zulus, of whom 500 are close to our camp."

This account is clear and precise, save in one point. Colonel Wood characteristically omits the part of Hamlet in the drama. No one would guess from it that it

was by Colonel Wood's order Buller and Russell drew the fire of the enemy and compelled the premature attack. The little party of horsemen, some hundred strong, had attacked a body of not less than 2,000 men, and, as the Official Report says, Zulu discipline, though good, was not good enough for this sort of thing. So the right horn of the army was rolled back when it came up to the attack on the north. The left worked round the western face, and the centre came up again at the southern front. A company of the 13th, in the cattle laager, had to withdraw, and the attack was evidently about to be pushed on to the main laager, when Wood ordered a counter attack by two companies of the 90th, under Major Hackett. This did good for awhile; but the foe was too strong, and the companies fell back within the laager. The Zulus continued to attack for three hours more, but were always driven back by the steadiness of the fire from the laager and the fort, and the coolness with which the guns of Tremlett's battery were served mainly from a point between the two. At half-past five, when the men were becoming rather weary, it was a question in the mind of more than one spectator which side would tire the sooner. The Zulus began to shake; and then Wood threw a company of the 13th into the cattle laager, to retake it, and a company of the 90th, which he accompanied on to the verge of the bluff, where they poured a heavy fire into the mass of foes below. If

there had been any doubt of the issue before, that settled the business, and Buller and Russell and their mounted men, who had been assisting in the defence within the laager, now mounted and turned the retreat into a rout, pursuing for seven miles, and until night fell, the almost unresisting throng, who unlike Englishmen, as history tells us, did know when they were beaten. Moreover, they realised the fact so thoroughly that there was no more Zulu trouble in the Kambula district, though Utrecht, close by, offered to the men of Ketchwayo a tempting object for loot, since, save by a small fort, it was otherwise undefended than by the Kambula camp in advance of it. It almost goes without saying that it turned out afterwards Colonel Wood had underestimated the number of Zulus killed. In a telegram to the general he put it at 1,200. A Zulu who was present afterwards said that the Ngobamokosi "could not face the bullets. . . . . No one could face them without being struck. . . . . The Umbonambi regiment . . . . were cut to pieces—quite destroyed." The total loss could not have been less on the Zulu side than 2,000 men.

Reinforcements having arrived from England the distribution of the force on the frontier was altered, and Major-General Newdigate was posted to the command of the Second Division, including the Utrecht District. But the little body that had done such glorious work at Kambula was not broken up. It retained its independ-

ence, and a free hand, under the title of "Brigadier-General Wood's Flying Column." These arrangements were promulgated on the 13th April, and on the 14th Wood took up fresh ground for his camp for sanitary reasons, some 600 or 700 yards to the west of that which had seen such good work on the 29th March. The loss of life on the 28th at Inhlobana (the loss in white men) had been no less than twelve officers and eighty men killed, and seven wounded, out of a strength of 400 under Buller, to say nothing of the native loss, which could not be ascertained owing to the desertion of seven-eighths of the survivors. On the following day the loss was only eighteen non-commissioned officers and men killed, and eight officers and fifty-seven non-commissioned officers and men wounded, but there were many subsequent fatalities among the latter. A "Gazette Extraordinary" was issued at Newcastle, Natal, on March 31st, in which Sir Bartle Frere said:

"The entire defeat of the determined attack made by this large force, after an action of five hours' duration, and the pursuit of the routed Zulus for several miles, cannot fail to have a great effect on the whole Zulu force, and on the future progress of the war. H. E. the High Commissioner begs Lord Chelmsford will convey to Colonel Wood and the officers and men specially named by him, the High Commissioner's thanks for the effectual services thus rendered by the 4th column."

The Secretary for War thought it sufficient to say that it "seems" the force had acted with a gallantry and determination worthy of great praise. Lord, then Colonel, Stanley is not by any means an old woman, but one cannot avoid thinking, in this connection, of Hamlet's reproof to his mother—"Seems, Madam, nay it is; I know not seems."

After the Kambula fight, as has been said, the Zulu army dispersed, small raiding parties only approaching the Transvaal frontier, mostly in the Pongola Valley; but Wood is not the man to leave much to chance, and he had patrols constantly moving through the district. In May, the patrols pushed in various directions to discover the easiest approaches to Ulundi. On the 8th of the month, the Flying Column left Kambula, and moved, in a south-easterly direction, across the Umvolosi river. On the 20th, with a patrol, the Brigadier searched for and buried the remains of some Europeans who had fallen on the 28th March. On the 2nd of June the Flying Column took its place four miles in front of the Second Division, and mostly kept that relative position up to and during the march to Ulundi. It, indeed, went towards Landtman's Drift on the Buffalo river on the 7th June, and returned on the 15th, escorting 600 waggons, and other vehicles, containing six weeks' supplies, and the following day again went ahead of the Second Division. On the 27th, the Brigadier despatched

his mounted troops to his left, and destroyed ten military kraals, without opposition, the Zulus being concentrated at Ulundi. On July 3rd, he crossed the Umvolosi and reconnoitred over the Ulundi plain. The next was the momentous day, and here Lord Chelmsford may be permitted to speak for himself:

"UMVOLOSI RIVER, NEAR ULUNDI.

"*July 4th*, 1879.

"This morning a force under my command, consisting of the 2nd division under Major-General Newdigate, numbering 1,870 Europeans, 530 natives, and 8 guns, and the Flying Column under Brigadier-General Wood, numbering 2,192 Europeans and 573 natives, 4 guns and 2 Gatlings, crossed the Umvolosi river at 6·15, and marching in a hollow square, ammunition and entrenching-tool carts and bearer company in its centre, reached an excellent position between Nodwengo and Ulundi about half-past eight A.M. This had been observed by Colonel Buller the day before.

"Soon after half-past seven the Zulu army was seen leaving its bivouacs and advancing on every side.

"The engagement was shortly afterwards commenced by the mounted men.

"By nine o'clock the attack was fully developed. At half-past nine the enemy wavered; the 17th Lancers, followed by the remainder of the mounted men, attacked them, and a general rout ensued. By noon Ulundi was in flames, and during the day all military kraals of the Zulu army and in the valley of the Umvolosi were

destroyed. At two P.M. the return march to the camp of the column commenced."

Lord Chelmsford brought especially to the notice of the Secretary for War the name of Brigadier-General Wood, who had become Sir Evelyn eleven days before. Three days later, Lord Chelmsford wrote again to Colonel Stanley:

"I cannot refrain from bringing again to your special notice the names of Brigadier-General Evelyn Wood, V.C., C.B. . . . . whose service during the advance towards Ulundi from the advanced base, and during the recent successful operations near Ulundi, have been invaluable.

"Brigadier-General Wood, although suffering at times severely in bodily health, has never spared himself, but has laboured incessantly night and day to overcome the innumerable difficulties which have had to be encountered during the advance through a country possessing no roads."

Now this was very nice of Lord Chelmsford, for it is evident from the Official Report that it was Sir Evelyn Wood's column which really won the victory of Ulundi. This may be seen from the following slight narrative. It was Colonel Buller, with the mounted men of the Flying Column, who on the 3rd July found the nature of the country and the strength and position of the enemy's forces. It was they who crossed the Umvolosi

in the morning at 6 o'clock. It was they who began the battle, and it was the 13th which bore the brunt of the Zulu attack. When the Zulus broke under the lances of the 17th, it was the mounted men of the Flying Column who completed the rout. They also burnt the kraals, which finished the business, except the capture of Ketchwayo.

On the 10th of July, the Flying Column marched towards Kwamagwasa, and reached that deserted Mission Station the next day, when the construction of a fort was at once commenced. From the 13th to the 15th it marched to St. Paul's. On the day after Ulundi fight, however, Sir Evelyn wrote in his report of the action as follows:

"His Excellency has frequently been good enough to speak with approbation of the order, regularity, and celerity of this column. I feel that eighteen months of incessant work in the field, which has not been without anxiety, more or less constant, makes it advisable, both in the interest of the service and for the sake of my own health and efficiency, that I should have a relaxation of work, if only for a short time. I desire, therefore, to place on record that the good service done by this column is due to the cheerful, untiring obedience of soldiers of all ranks, which has rendered my executive duties a source of continued pleasure, and to the efforts of the undermentioned staff, regimental and departmental officers, many of whom have worked day and night to carry out my wishes."

On the next day Lord Chelmsford wrote:

"The Lieutenant-General commanding desires to place on record his hearty appreciation of the gallantry and steadiness displayed by all ranks of the force under his command during the battle of Ulundi." He added: "The two columns being about to separate, the Lieutenant-General begs to tender his best thanks to Brigadier-General E. Wood, V.C., C.B., for the assistance rendered him during the recent operations."

This praise cannot be said to have been overdone. But there was now one at hand whose praise is praise indeed, seeing he well knows how to convey every shade of censure. In a letter of the 9th from Port Durnford, Sir Garnet Wolseley said:

"My dear Wood, Just a line to congratulate you on all you have done for the State. You and Buller have been the bright spots in this miserable war, and all through I have felt proud that I numbered you both amongst my friends and companions-in-arms."

This was followed up, on the 17th, by the following General Order from the same staunch friend:

"In notifying to the army in South Africa that Brigadier-General Wood, V.C., C.B., and Lieutenant-Colonel Buller, C.B., are about to leave Zululand for England, General Sir Garnet Wolseley desires to place on record his high appreciation of the services they have rendered during the war, which their military ability

and untiring energy have so very largely contributed to bring to an end. The success which has attended the operations of the Flying Column is largely due to General Wood's genius for war, to the admirable system he has established in his command, and to the zeal and energy with which his ably conceived plans have been carried out by Colonel Buller."

Just a week later, Lord Chelmsford, who had resigned, warmed up a little, and in a speech he made at Maritzburg, he said:

"I never would have believed it possible for any general to receive such assistance and devotion as I have experienced from my men . . . It would be invidious to particularise individuals and services, but, when I look back eighteen months, two names stand out in broad relief, the names of Wood and Buller. I can say that these two have been my right and left supporters during the whole of my time in this country."

The next day he wrote to Wood:

"My hearty congratulations on your promotion to K.C.B.; it ought to have been given to you months ago. As the authorities have apparently woke up and realised the fact that you had not in any way been rewarded for your good work in the old Colony and at the beginning of this war, I hope they will also understand that a good deal is still due to you for Ulundi."

In a "Narrative of the Field Operations connected with the Zulu War of 1879," published in 1881 by Messrs. Sampson Low and Co., I find some interesting notes on Sir Evelyn Wood. At Keiskamma Hoek, Mr. F. W. Streatfield, the author, says;

"I had never met Colonel Wood before, though I knew him well by reputation. I am thankful to say it was my good fortune to serve under him for two months, and most thoroughly did I appreciate the privilege of having such a soldier as my commanding officer and such a man as my friend . . . I feel grateful indeed to him for many an arduous duty and weary march made light by the kindly tone in which the order was given that they should be done; and for the many pleasant and peaceful hours passed in his tent, where he ever ceased to be the commanding officer and became the genial, warm-hearted friend, with never varying kindness and hospitality. Let not the reader imagine that a duty slurred over, or ineffectually carried out, would meet with but a gentle rebuke from Colonel Wood. Far from it. On duty he is to others as to himself, hard as adamant; and woe betide the careless, slovenly soldier who happens to serve under him."

I learn further from Mr. Streatfield's pages that one night Colonel Wood had a narrow escape on a patrol at Buffalo Heights "through not hearing a soldier's challenge. He was shot at at short range, but luckily missed." Colonel Wood got fever in May, 1878, but

was "as well as ever" by the middle of June, thanks to the care taken of him in "Brown's House," as the hospital was called, "near Hudson's Store."

"At Ulundi," said Archibald Forbes, in the famous dispatch he took to the frontier, 110 miles, in fourteen hours, riding through the night, "Evelyn Wood's face was radiant with the rapture of the fray as he rode up and down behind his regiment exposed to a storm of missiles."

On the 5th August, Sir Evelyn left Cape Town for England, and ten days later the following despatch was sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Sir Bartle Frere:

"I cannot permit Major-General Sir H. E. Wood, V.C., K.C.B., and Colonel Redvers Buller, V.C., C.B., to leave this colony without venturing to call the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the political services rendered by these officers during the two years and a half they have served in South Africa. It is not my province, nor is it necessary, I should say a word regarding the military services they have performed, and I have already brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Government the important bearing which the position of Sir H. E. Wood's column in Zululand from January to July, had on the safety of Natal and the Transvaal; but I would beg to call attention to the excellent political effects of the dealings of these two officers with the colonial forces and with the colonists in

general. Up to 1878 there had always been among the colonists somewhat of a dread of the strict discipline which was, as they thought, likely to be enforced by a military officer were they to serve under him, and a great distrust of Her Majesty's officers generally to conduct operations against the Kaffirs. The feeling has now, I believe, disappeared among all who have served under General Wood and Colonel Buller. They have shown the colonists that military officers can deal with volunteers as with their own men, and lead them to assured victory without sacrificing or risking more than is necessary in so doing. To the experience of their treatment of officers and men under them, is largely due the readiness with which officers of the regular army are now appointed to positions in the Colonial forces in the Colony, and the good feeling which obtains at this moment between the Imperial and Colonial troops now in the field in Zululand. I would particularly notice the influence which both officers gained over their Dutch auxiliaries and the Dutch population of the Transvaal districts bordering on Zululand. I believe that whenever Sir E. Wood and his gallant second-in-command may serve again in the Transvaal, they will find all who served under them in Zululand anxious again to join Her Majesty's forces in any capacity that may be desired."

And on the 16th of October Sir A. Horsford, Military Secretary at Army Head-Quarters, informed Sir Evelyn Wood that a communication had been received from the

Colonial Office, bringing to notice the very valuable political services rendered by him while in command of a column in Zululand; and informing him that this communication had afforded much gratification to the Commander-in-Chief, who had caused a record of the same to be made in the records of the Department, where it lies entombed among a vast amount of much more curious matter.

Before Sir Evelyn left South Africa, he received a silver shield from the inhabitants of Cape Colony, and an address with a handsome piece of plate from the people of Natal. But it was when he landed at Plymouth, on August 26th, that he learnt, once more, the people of England are not ungrateful to their heroic servants. At various points he was recognised and heartily greeted; but it was in his own county of Essex that the popular welcome took the warmer tone of personal friendship. When he had paid the necessary visit to the Adjutant-General, Sir Evelyn took train at Fenchurch Street for Rainham, accompanied by his wife, Lord Hatherley, his uncle, and a number of friends. At the little station, which was decked with bright bunting, dank with unintermittent rain, he was met by Sir Thomas Lennard, his brother-in-law. Nearly every house and every church along the road to Belhus was bright with national flags, and at the entrance to the demesne there was a profuse display of ensigns and devices, while guards of honour of the 2nd Essex Artillery and the 1st and 15th

Essex Rifles were in attendance. One device bore the legend "Welcome Home," and another contained illustrations of Sir Evelyn's medals and decorations. He was received with hearty cheers from a large assembly, including many of the leading people of the neighbourhood and indeed the county. The vicar of the parish presented an address conceived in an excellent spirit, and prefaced and followed by a speech quite unexceptionable in manner and matter. In his reply Sir Evelyn said:

"One of the most pleasant moments of my life in South Africa was when I saw the way in which my men said 'Good-bye' to me—the men of whom, as it was commonly said, I worked their souls out, the men I worked with day after day and night after night, and whom I had necessarily treated with the sternest discipline—these men in saying 'Good-bye' to me said it in a manner I can never forget . . . . . With the soldiers under me, from the buglers to the colonels, as I was telling the Adjutant-General this morning, during the eighteen months I have been in South Africa, I have never had a single disagreement."

A hearty cheer followed the conclusion of the brief speech, and then a procession was formed through the village of Aveley and into the park at the other end, a mile away. The procession was headed by about forty yeoman farmers of the district, followed by the band of

the training ship *Cornwall* and the volunteers with their bands. The General's carriage had the horses detached, and was drawn by some fifty labourers, who dragged it to the fine old mansion where Sir Evelyn's mother was waiting to greet her honoured son. Sir Thomas and Lady Barrett Lennard dispensed liberal hospitality to all comers. Some days before, at a meeting in Chelmsford, it had been resolved to offer Sir Evelyn a county welcome in the county town, and this decision was ratified by a larger meeting at the Cannon Street Hotel. But other honours were to intervene; he was knighted by the Queen at Balmoral on the 9th September, and was received by the Prime Minister, Lord Beaconsfield, at Hughenden Manor on the 30th of September. He was present at the Livery dinner of the Fishmongers' Company, of which his grandfather and father had been members, where he paid the warmest tribute of admiration to numbers of soldiers, living and departed, who had done their duty in the Gaika, or Kaffir, and in the Zulu campaigns. In rebutting the absurd accusations of inhumanity against the troops, he casually said:

"I can assure you that the only Zulu I personally chastised was one who declined to help us to carry a decrepit woman from a mountain where she must have starved. When I tell you it was the man's mother, you will pardon this practical effort to induce the heathen to honour his parent."

The county demonstration took place on the 15th October at Chelmsford, where a platform was erected in front of the Shire Hall, enclosing one of the guns captured in the Crimean War. All the notabilities of the county were present, and Sir Evelyn, with his wife and eldest daughter, arrived from Danbury Palace, accompanied by the Bishop of St. Albans. He was received by a guard of honour of the 1st Essex A.B. Volunteers, and a large crowd, for the day was observed as a general holiday, heartily cheered the brilliant Essex soldier, who wore his uniform as Colonel of the 90th Light Infantry. Sir Charles Du Cane presented the sword of honour, as well as the service of plate, and happily cited the confession of Ketchwayo that it was the victory of Kambula which gave the mortal blow to the Zulu power. The sword bore on the blade an inscription to the effect that it was presented to Sir Evelyn "in recognition of the eminent services rendered by him to his country during the recent arduous campaign in Zululand, and of the conspicuous zeal, energy, and gallantry, which have distinguished his entire military career." The speech in reply laid down the principle of action of an English officer:

"Whatever party, whatever policy may direct the wars which are the result of England's Imperial range, the true soldier always fights for home and country. It was well said 'Pro aris et focis' is the life of patriotism. Battles are no longer fought on the hearthstones of these

islands, but on the boundaries where our vast rule has extended; and whether it is in Africa or in Afghanistan that the soldier fights, he resembles the spell-bound hero of old legends, who travelled in a circle over hundreds of miles but never got far away from home."

In the evening about 400 gentlemen sat down to a banquet in the Corn Exchange, which was gay with decorations and trophies bearing the names of battles wherein the guest of the day chiefly distinguished himself. Once more he assigned the praise to his comrades, for, as Archibald Forbes had somewhere said, "it is in Evelyn Wood's company that one hears least of Evelyn Wood." A ball wound up the festivities of the day.

The last of the series of banquets was unique. On November 1st, the Bar of England entertained Sir Evelyn Wood at dinner in the Hall of the Middle Temple, the Attorney-General in the chair, while among the guests were all the judges who were not on circuit. Sir John Holker made an admirable speech in proposing the toast of the evening to the hero of Kambula, who had been for five and a half years entitled to wear wig and gown. Although, three centuries before, Drake had been honoured with a banquet in Middle Temple Hall, yet he was not a lawyer. And although Lord Erskine, like Sir Evelyn, had been both midshipman and soldier before he was lawyer, while the first Lord Chelmsford had served in the Navy and fought at Copenhagen before being called to the Bar, yet the fact

remains that the banquet of All Saints' day, 1879, was, and will probably long remain, like a notable of old time concerning whom Seneca wrote:

Quæris Alcidæ parem?
Nemo est nisi ipse.

In a speech delivered by Sir Evelyn at Grocers' Hall on the 25th November in the following year, I find a passage very characteristic of the man; and this appears to be a convenient connection in which to insert it. Referring to a proposal then in the air for abolishing Regimental Colours, Sir Evelyn remarked:

"It is suggested that they are cumbersome, and are the cause of sacrifices. After all they are what?—a coloured rag on a stick, and is it worth while to risk men's lives for a piece of tawdry silk? You might as well say that because honour is invisible, and faith impalpable, they do not exist as load-stars for the mind. Colours are potent to check disaster, to rally fugitives, to inspire attack. In the confusion of battle, when formations become disordered and men's nerves are shaken, they act as a sort of movable fortress; a breast-work made up of a determined sense of duty; an ideal round which leading spirits group and form an impregnable reality that snatches victory, and in saving an army preserves the honour of the country. We read how Napoleon at Arcola, how Halkett at Waterloo, and many other leaders at critical moments, electrified their soldiers by bearing colours to the front. Whatever continental

Armies may do, I hope that we, whose few soldiers have often to withstand the shock of overwhelming numbers of brave savages, will not give up this strong incentive for men to hang together . . . . . The chivalry that is shown in the defence of any high ideal, whatever may be its symbol, is surely never wasted. The actors . . . may perish, but the example remains, and their history will serve as an inspiration in the future. Were this a simple and technical question, I would apologise for touching on it, but it is to my mind a moral question interesting to all Britons, and involving some of the brightest aspects of the gloom of warfare."

Meanwhile Sir Evelyn had been back to Zululand on one of the saddest missions that was ever confided to any man. I left out of the brief story of his services in the war against Ketchwayo all mention of the death of Prince Louis Napoleon. That most pathetic incident in a campaign full of heroic memoirs deserves a section to itself. The late Prince Imperial of France, who had his "baptism of fire" nine years before in the first fight of the campaign which ended the Third Empire, had frankly given his services to the country that lent him a refuge and had passed, with credit, through the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. He had gallantly volunteered for active work in Zululand, though he was "the only son of his mother and she was a widow." Great had been the searchings of heart among some of the highest in England when the request to be allowed

to go out was received. Yet how could it be refused? He was a soldier and, as the fates would have it, a British soldier. The Zulu power was *hostis humani generis.* As no dynastic or international questions were involved in the war, there could be no better opportunity for the young Prince to put in practice the lessons he had received on Woolwich Common. So he went out with the reinforcements, and on the redistribution of the force he was attached to the Staff of the Second Division, under Major-General Newdigate. There, as at Woolwich, he became an universal favourite. His special work was in connection with the Quartermaster-General's department, including the selection of routes and camping grounds, under Lieut.-Col., now Major-General, Sir Richard Harrison. He had taken part in more than one of the necessary reconnaissances, and when the Division had crossed the Blood river on the 31st of May, and moved onwards to Itelezi Hill on the following day, the country had been thoroughly examined, and not a Zulu had been seen; so it is no wonder that in sending an officer forward to select a camping ground only a small escort should be sent with him, namely six troopers of Bettington's Horse and six of Shepstone's Basutos. The officer sent was the Prince Imperial. He was accompanied by Lieutenant Carey of the same department, who obtained permission to join the party, in no sense in command, but merely to obtain some verifications of observations made on a previous recon-

naissance. A friendly Zulu was told off as a guide, but the six Basutos did not put in an appearance, and instead of waiting to have them replaced the party started off at a quarter past nine in the morning. At Itelezi Hill at ten o'clock the party was met by Col. Harrison, who spent some time in selecting a good water supply. Then leaving the A.Q.M.G., the party moved on and gained the summit of one of the flat-topped hills with which the region abounds. Here the Prince made a sketch of the country, and about half-past two the party descended towards a kraal near the Itvotvosi river. Up to this time no sign of the enemy had been noticed, but in the kraal some dogs were prowling about, and some remains of fresh food were found, showing that the kraal had been occupied but a short time before. The ground near the kraal was covered, save towards the north and north-east, with long coarse grass and Indian corn some five or six feet in height. At three o'clock the Prince ordered the escort to "off-saddle" and "knee-halter" for grazing. The men made some coffee, and a rest was enjoyed till ten minutes past four, when the Zulu guide reported that he had seen a Zulu come over the hill. Then the horses were caught and saddled and the Prince gave the order "prepare to mount." As the party was obeying, a volley was fired at them within fifteen yards of the hut by some Zulus, who had crept up through the grass. The troopers were unable to reply, as, by some astounding blunder or carelessness, their Martini-Henry carbines

had been allowed to remain unloaded. The volley hit nobody, but it effectually frightened the horses, before the troopers had got control of them. The Prince, in the act of giving the word "mount," was unable to get his leg over the saddle of his terrified charger, and he ran alongside it as it followed the plunging horses of the escort, which got completely out of hand. The Prince then tried to vault on his horse, not a great feat for one so active as he was, but the saddle wallet he caught tore away, and so the horse escaped. The Zulus apparently fired after the first lot of the runaways, and brought down one of them, while another trooper and the native guide remained at the kraal and were not seen alive afterwards. When Mr. Carey had got across a "donga," or dry bed of a storm stream, he learnt that the Prince was left behind, and had been noticed running to the donga pursued by Zulus. The Prince's horse being seen riderless, and it being apparent that the ground was occupied by a goodly number of the enemy, Mr. Carey made no effort to ascertain the fate of the Prince, contenting himself with the assumption that he had fallen. So he and four troopers bolted to the Second Division camp by Itelezi Hill. In order to get away from the Zulus, Mr. Carey crossed the river Tombokala, and after riding four miles fell in with Sir Evelyn Wood and Colonel Buller, who were looking out for a track for the advance of the Flying Column the next day. By this time it was all but dark, the 1st June in the Southern Hemisphere

having as brief daylight as the 1st December in England. Nothing could be done but wait till the dawn, and that had scarcely shown itself when strong parties were sent out from both camps to examine the ground. There was no long delay in ascertaining the worst. One trooper lay where he had been shot, the other nearer the kraal; and not far from the first one, in the bed of the donga, lay all that was mortal of the hope of the Imperialist party in France, and the death of him had been worthy of the illustrious race from which he sprung. He had turned and faced the savage horde, and had emptied his revolver into them. Then his sword was useless against the assegais, and he fell where he stood, with sixteen wounds, all in front, like "the noblest Roman of them all." A bier was formed with some lances and a blanket, and the body was carried to an ambulance, and so taken to the Second Division camp. The doctors used such preservative measures as were possible, and the body was dispatched to Pietermaritzburg the same evening, under an escort of the 17th Lancers. It reached the capital of Natal just a week later, and was received in solemn state by the townsfolk. In due course it was taken to Durban and there embarked on H.M.S. *Boadicea*, which at Simon's Bay transferred it to H.M.S. *Orontes* for conveyance to England, where it was interred for a time in the chapel at Chiselhurst, and now rests in the Mausoleum at Farnborough.

The bereaved mother made up her mind soon after peace was restored by the capture of Ketchwayo, to visit the scene of her son's glorious death, and it was only natural that Sir Evelyn Wood, who had been the first to arrive on the scene, should be selected to accompany the Empress, who was—Oh, the pity of it!—left without a throne, a husband, or a child. This was in March, 1880. In the previous December he had been appointed to the command of the Belfast District, with the rank of Brigadier-General, but he was only in charge of the Ulster head-quarters seventeen days, when he was transferred, with a similar rank, to Chatham, and here he assumed command on the 12th January. His mission in March was obviously one requiring the utmost tact and delicacy. It occupied three months; and when the mournful visit had been paid, and the Empress returned to England, it was said, by a high official at court, of her cicerone, that "well as Evelyn Wood had done whatever he had put his hand to, he had never achieved a greater success" than as guide and companion to the august lady who had been left so conspicuously alone in the world.

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CHAPTER VI.

AMONG THE BOERS.

In Boerland—A Revelation—Preparing for a Struggle—Ministerial Vacillation—The Boers' High Hand—The 94th attacked—Sir G. P. Colley advances—Two Repulses—Soldiers and Politicians—Laing's Nek—Majuba Hill—Boers Victorious—Colley killed—Wood in Command—Also High Commissioner—"Backing and Filling"—Wood advises Fighting—Boer Treachery—Bi-lingual despatches—"Friendly Communications"—Wood promises Victory—His Political Position—Being Supplanted—Republican Flag Lowered—Meeting the Boers—The British Surrender—Falsehoods in Parliament—Sham Responsibility—Crafty Designs—An Exposure—Lying Legitimate—Royal Commission—Wood Dissents—A Shameful Convention—Compromising Compliments—Again at Chatham—G.C.M.G.

We now approach a period of the career of Sir Evelyn Wood for which he has been greatly blamed. It must be confessed that I felt this question involved very much, as the Army notoriously has done, for more than ten years. But there are two sides to every question; and I think it is demonstrable that Sir Evelyn Wood has been silent under provocation such as no soldier of our time has received, and has had

his reputation risked, if not, happily, destroyed by one of the most deliberate attempts to deceive the English people of which history furnishes an example. It will be necessary to bring this out presently. For the moment it will be well to proceed with the narrative of events. He was just beginning to feel his feet at Chatham, having been little over five months actually in the command, when he was warned once more for service in South Africa, and his Letter of Service was dated 6th January, 1881. On the 14th he sailed from Plymouth, and he landed at Durban on February 12th, and three days later assumed command of a column of reinforcements at the Biggarsberg, marching on to Newcastle where, according to Major-General Sir George Pomeroy Colley, it arrived on the 17th "in excellent order." Already the Government at home was beginning to fear the responsibility—the Parliamentary responsibility—of offending a section of its supporters by maintaining the annexation of the Transvaal formally approved by the previous Parliament. We have seen that during the early part of the Zulu war, which was undertaken in the first instance to protect the Boers and the German settlers from Ketchwayo and Sekukuni, his vassal, the Boers had been restless, and the small contingent which had responded to Wood's call had deserted on the morning of the fight at Kambula. For three years, indeed, the Boers had been preparing for a struggle to recover their independence; and when they found Mr.

Gladstone apparently firmly seated in power they resolved to assert their claims by the strong hand. The Government at home was without a policy at first. But before long it showed that it meant to fight the Dutch men. Major-General Sir G. P. Colley was instructed to take the most energetic measures. He was not only in command of the few troops remaining in Natal and the Transvaal, but he was High Commissioner. He had been specially recommended for the position by Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had said, being authorised to say in the name of the British Government, in a speech at Pretoria, and in the most emphatic way, that no political change in England would lead to the withdrawal of British rule from the Transvaal. In the Queen's Speech, written by Mr. Gladstone for the opening of the session of 1881, Her Majesty was made to speak of "maintaining my supremacy over the Transvaal, with its diversified population;" and the same Prime Minister, in debate on the Address in answer to the Speech, said that the Queen's supremacy had given a pledge to the large native population. Lord Kimberley, as Colonial Secretary, in the House of Lords said very much the same thing. So conclusive was this thought to be, that the Boers telegraphed to England their "bitter disappointment" with the decision of the Government. And, indeed, they had reason to be disappointed, after the language Mr. Gladstone had employed on the platform when, to use his great rival's words, he was in a

"position of more freedom and less responsibility." But the Boers had not waited for the decision of Government or the opening of Parliament. On the 16th December a patrol had fired on the escort of Major Clarke, the Landrost. On the 20th, Colonel Anstruther was taking 250 men of the 94th regiment from Lydenberg to Pretoria, when he was stopped by a body of Boers, who handed him a letter forbidding him to go further. He announced his intention of following his orders, and was incontinently fired upon by a number of Boers, who killed poor Anstruther and eighty-six men, besides wounding a number of others, of whom twenty-six soon afterwards died. No wonder the Speech from the Throne, the following month, announced that measures were in progress for the prompt vindication of Her Majesty's authority. As one of these measures, Colley made a laager at Newcastle, provisioned it for thirteen days, and collected 1,300 men. He advanced on the 28th January with a thousand men, at half-past six in the morning, and was speedily repulsed with the loss of seven officers and eighty men killed and a hundred wounded. It was a bad beginning, but there was to be a worse ending. On the 7th February the Boers stopped the post, and on the 8th Colley attempted to reopen communications, but was again repulsed. However, there was a hope of an avoidance of further trouble. On January 27th Sir Hercules Robinson telegraphed to Mr. Brand, President of the Orange Free State, that if

"avowed opposition ceased forthwith" the British Government would frame a scheme which would meet the views of "all enlightened friends of the Transvaal." As nothing came of this proposition, and as the Boers remained entrenched on Laing's Nek, Sir G. Colley, having been reinforced by Wood's column, sent Wood promptly to the rear, though he used him for a reconnaissance once in the direction of Wesselstroom. On the 16th Lord Kimberley had telegraphed Sir Evelyn, and General Colley replied:

"Latter part of your telegram of 16th to Wood not understood. There can be no hostilities if no resistance is made; but am I to leave Laing's Nek, in Natal territory, in Boer occupation, and our garrisons isolated, and short of provisions, or occupy former and relieve latter?"

Colley had estimated that the garrisons were short of food on the 19th, and the same day he was instructed not to march to their relief nor to occupy Laing's Nek; then, it is again advisable to say, held by the Boers. The exact words of this message are worth giving, seeing Lady Bellairs, in her book on the subject, seems to blame the military authorities on the spot for not having provided for the relief of the garrisons:

"19th February.—It will be essential that garrisons should be free to provision themselves"—but surely Lord Kimberley had heard of the Irishman who took

two French prisoners, and when he was told to bring them along answered they would not let him—"and peaceful intercourse with them allowed; but we do not mean that you should march to relief of garrisons or occupy Laing's Nek if arrangement proceeds. Fix reasonable time within which answer must be sent by Boers." This reasonable time having been allowed, without result, Sir G. Colley proceeded with the measures which the Queen in her most gracious Speech had authorised him to employ. Wood had been sent to Maritzburg to supervise base-arrangements and the march of reinforcements. In order that there should be no misapprehensions about the exact situation, it may be well to give *in extenso* a despatch from Lord Kimberley to Governor Sir Hercules Robinson, dated February 16th, 1881:—

"I have received following telegram from Sir G. Colley: '13th. Letter received from Krüger. Purport. —Anxious to make one more effort to stop bloodshed. Boers driven to arms in self-defence; views continually misrepresented; if deed of annexation cancelled willing to co-operate with British Government; everything for good of South Africa. Know that English people will be on their side if truth reached them; are so strong in this conviction that would not fear inquiry of a Royal Commission, which they know would give them their rights; ready therefore, if troops ordered to withdraw from Transvaal, to give free passage and withdraw from

their positions. If annexation upheld will fight to the end.' I replied to-day as follows: 'Your telegram 13th received. Inform Krüger that if Boers will desist from armed opposition we shall be quite ready to appoint Commissioners with extensive powers, and who may develop the scheme referred to in my telegram to you of 8th inst. Add that if this proposal is accepted, you are authorised to agree to suspension of hostilities on our part.' Message ends."

Therefore, the Boers having rejected Lord Kimberley's ultimatum, there was nothing for it but to see whether they were to succeed in armed rebellion, and be allowed to impose terms upon the power of England which they had insulted and defied, even to the shedding of blood.

On February 26th Colley occupied Majuba mountain, overlooking Laing's Nek, and the Boers did not find him out till the next day. Then he was attacked at seven in the morning and his forces badly beaten, he himself being among the victims of the Boers. At six o'clock that evening Sir Evelyn heard of his death, and sent the news to the Home Government as follows: "Colley occupied Majuba mountain last night. . . . Was attacked 7 A.M. Repulsed all attacks till 2·30 P.M. when our people were driven back, losing heavily. I shall go back to Newcastle to-morrow." He was as good as his word, for he left Maritzburg for Newcastle before daylight on the 28th, on which day he became Major-General (local), in virtue of his appointment as second

in command. He also became High Commissioner, in consequence of his appointment as Deputy High Commissioner. Three days out of the first four in March he was interrogated by the Colonial Secretary as to Colley's steps to communicate with the Boers according to his instructions, and Sir Evelyn replied as follows :—"Colley wrote 21st February to Joubert offering to suspend hostilities, if answer was received within forty-eight hours." Thus, in taking up the responsibilities of his predecessor, Wood's first step was to convince the Government at home that their instructions had been fully carried out by the lamented Colley, than whom no man had a greater reputation among soldiers of the period. Thus, at the moment Sir Evelyn Wood took over charge in both a civil and a military capacity, this was the situation :—The Boers were in active rebellion; they had shot our soldiers to death; the Queen had pledged herself to assert her supremacy, but her Ministers were making attempts secretly to condone the offences; the general in charge of the operations had been ordered to make a proposition to the Boers; he had done so; the proposal had been treated with contempt; the general thereupon proceeded, with an insufficient force, to the measures the Sovereign and the Ministers were pledged to; he was beaten, and the Ministers insulted his memory by demanding, after his death, whether he had carried out his orders in a loyal spirit. The prospect before Sir Evelyn was not a nice one. It was plain he

could not trust the Ministry to honestly back him up in anything like energetic measures. They promised him reinforcements. They even offered him more than he desired. They wished to send him six battalions and some cavalry. He asked that only three battalions should be embarked, and that no more cavalry should be sent. Up to the 4th March the Government were urging Sir Evelyn forward with one hand, and beckoning to the Boers with the other. On the 4th Sir Evelyn remonstrated, suggesting that no steps should be taken in the way of a movement against the Boers before he was ready, which would not be for a day or two, owing to want of food and the non-arrival of reinforcements which were delayed by the swollen rivers —indeed, it would be impossible to be ready within a week. But, he added, and this point must be expressly borne in mind, that he must ask to be allowed, when he was ready, to disperse the Boers before any negotiations were further carried on. He declared he must act within a week if Potchestroom were to be saved, adding: "as I hear they have breadstuffs only till 15th and then mealies, but how much I do not know; when I move I am confident, with God's blessing, of success." The next day he telegraphed to the Colonial Secretary at noon:

"I anticipate hearing from Joubert soon. Fear, until Boers are defeated, leaders, if altogether excluded from amnesty, will continue hostilities if they can; but on

the other hand, the very unfavourable weather and their admitted certainty of eventual suppression may cause dispersion. Sir G. Colley was very averse to pardoning leaders, and your telegram of 10th implies such cannot be granted. Instruct me fully on this point, for much will turn on it, and, reflecting on similar struggles in history, I do not attach as much importance to punishing leaders as did Sir G. Colley, though I would not recommend allowing them to remain in Transvaal, nor would I accept them as representatives of the people. In discussing settlement of country, my constant endeavour shall be to carry out the spirit of your orders; but considering the disasters we have sustained, I think the happiest result will be that, after accelerating successful action, which I hope to fight in about fourteen days, the Boers should disperse without any guarantee, and then many, now undoubtedly coerced, will readily settle down. In any negotiations Joubert will probably make dispersion contingent on amnesty. I may be cut off from communicating with you, and if you wish to avoid further fighting, I suggest, while giving me no instructions for the future settlement, you should empower me, if absolutely necessary, to promise life and property, but not residence, to leaders. This I would not do if dispersion could be effected without it. Mr. Nelson arrived; left Potchestroom on 19th February. Garrison on half rations; short of water sometimes. After 15th March will have tinned meat and mealies, but not fire-wood. Winsloe talked of firing off all ammunition before he surrendered. I hope to relieve them by end of month."

Nothing could well be more statesmanlike and more like a benevolent soldier than this series of propositions. On the same afternoon, four hours later, he telegraphed to Lord Kimberley: "Joubert asks how far I will co-operate in Brand's propositions. I have offered to meet him to-morrow at Laing's Nek. Shall follow strictly the line of your instructions." Nothing can be much clearer than that he had now shifted the whole responsibility for what might follow on to the shoulders of Lord Kimberley and his colleagues in the Cabinet. On the next afternoon he met Joubert, and in order that the invested garrisons might not be starved into surrender while the Boers were taking their time over the proposals of the British Government, he accepted an armistice for eight days. His official message was:

"Have signed agreement with Joubert for suspension of hostilities till midnight, 14th March, for the purpose of receiving Krüger's reply and any further communications. We have power of sending eight days' supplies to our garrisons, and Joubert has undertaken to pass them through Boer lines, and, on arrival of provisions at such garrisons, the blockading and besieging parties will cease hostilities for eight days. I hope you approve."

The Boers carried out their arrangement in all cases except at Potchestroom, the most important point,

perhaps, of any. There the Boer leader, Cronjee, deliberately withheld from the garrison the news of the armistice. The place accordingly fell into his hands by the surrender of the commandant, who saw death by starvation staring him and his troops in the face. On the night of the same 6th March Sir Evelyn Wood telegraphed to the Secretary for War:

"Want of food prevents advance for about ten days. Ingagane and Incandu are impassable, I have therefore lost nothing in suspending hostilities, and gained eight days' food for garrisons most in want. Hope you and His Royal Highness approve."

There was a subtle distinction between the replies received from the two departments under which Sir Evelyn was acting. From the Colonial Office the telegram came "Her Majesty's Government approve armistice." From the War Office the text was: "Military conditions of armistice approved." On the next day, the 7th, Wood telegraphed at 2 P.M.:

"Gist of Krüger's answer to Colley's of 31st February. In conjunction with members of Government here, have satisfaction to assure you that we are very grateful for the declaration in the name of Her Majesty's Government, that, under certain conditions, they are inclined to cease hostilities. It appears to us that now, the first time since unlucky annexation, there is chance of coming to peaceful settlement. Our hearts

bleed over necessity of shedding more blood of burghers and soldiers. In our opinion a meeting of representatives from both sides will probably lead speedily to satisfactory result, therefore suggest representatives from both sides should be present, with full powers to determine preliminaries of honourable peace and ratify same."

This was from the men who had commenced the war, who had shot down our men in open and flagrant rebellion, who had, till now, treated with contempt Sir George Colley's proposals in the name of the British Government. To most Englishmen it would seem that their hearts bled a little too late. But Lady Bellairs let the cat out of the bag by saying (p. 403 of her book) "The peace was, though, a foregone conclusion, even at the time the armistice was agreed to!" That is the key to the whole position. On the 8th Sir Evelyn Wood was informed that the Government would treat with any of the Boer leaders, apparently including the men who had in person invaded Natal territory, and even the miscreant Cronjee, who had obtained the surrender of Potchestroom under false pretences:

". . . . We should make no exception as to persons with whom we will negotiate, requiring only that they shall be duly authorised representatives of Boers with power to act on their behalf. We understand Krüger's answer as opening way to further proceedings on basis

of preceding communications, and we now propose to appoint Commissioners, whose names I will state at earliest moment, who will examine whole matter and will be ready for friendly communications with any persons appointed by Boers."

Sir Evelyn Wood, like a soldier, an Englishman, while disclaiming any desire of fighting for fighting's sake, urged that the dispersion of the Boers by force should precede any negotiation. "I recommend decided though lenient action, and I can, humanly speaking, promise victory. . . I undertake to enforce dispersion." What was the reply, after four days' cogitation, by the Cabinet, and the pressure of the "important friends" the Boers were always boasting they had in England, may it not have been, Ireland? Sir Evelyn was ordered to inform the Boers on what terms they could have peace. His instructions, dated March 12th ran: "Inform Boer leaders that if Boers will undertake to desist armed opposition and disperse to their homes, we are prepared to name the following Commissioners. . . . Commission would be authorised to consider the following points." Meanwhile Mr. Gladstone had been declaring, even before the disaster at Majuba, that there would be no more fighting under any circumstances. The day after Sir Evelyn had got his instructions to carry out a policy of which he had solemnly recorded his disapproval, he telegraphed to Lord Kimberley at half past nine in the morning:

"Krüger, sending Reuter's 22nd February message with Mr. Gladstone's statement that steps to avoid bloodshed will be taken, asks how far my instructions go. I have replied I am still awaiting your orders, and shall be at Prospect to-day."

On the 16th, from 10 in the morning till 6 in the evening, Wood conferred with the Boer leaders, explaining fully to them the terms offered by the British Government, and three hours later he sent the subjoined message to the Colonial Secretary:

". . . . After eight hours' talk I am confirmed in the opinion expressed in my telegram of 5th instant, words 131 to 139, *i.e.*, but considering the disaster we have sustained I think the happiest results will be, that after accelerating successful action which I hope to fight in about fourteen days the Boers should disperse without any guarantee, and then many now undoubtedly coerced will readily settle down."

In Boerland as in Ireland there were a number of total irreconcileables who professed to represent "The People," and by virtue of "social pressure," in other than Sir Arthur Helps's sense, contrived to force into the ranks of their adherents many who wanted nothing better than to be allowed to go about their business, with a secret conviction that the British Crown was as good a rule to live under as any Republic existing,

probable, or possible. Of Sir Evelyn's recommendation to be allowed to retrieve the Majuba and other defeats before proceeding further with negotiations, Lord Kimberley loftily took not the least notice, but made certain observations, always weakening down, on some objections raised by the Boers. On the 20th he sent for further instructions an hour before midnight, the Armistice having now expired six days, the last straw, almost, in the endurance of a soldier being worded as follows:

"I have not heard from you result of communications with Boers as to my telegram of 17th. We rely on you, unless military necessity requires immediate action, to give time to consider points on which you may be unable to come to agreement with Boer leaders."

It seems to me that seldom, if ever, in the history of England has a prominent, trusted and reasonably ambitious soldier been put in a more difficult position. If he had been merely a soldier, he might have got out of the difficulty by resigning. But he was wedged into his place by the fact that he was also an official under the Colonial Office. And it is in the minds of not a few people that the Government deliberately took advantage of a fact which honourable men would have ignored—namely, that Sir Evelyn Wood belongs to a family traditionally "Liberal," that his brother had stood for

Essex, pledged up to the neck to Mr. Gladstone's policy, and that he was as likely to stretch a point, therefore, in favour of any orders proceeding from the Government as any soldier in the Army. At the same time, the Ministers, who were thus straining Sir Evelyn's allegiance as a soldier almost to breaking point, were preparing to supplant him by another general, Sir Frederick Roberts, who happened to be home at the time from India with all his honours thick upon him. Indeed, Sir Frederick and his staff, including General Newdigate, were already close at hand, prepared to do as the Government would. If the thing were to be done, and remonstrance was to be of no avail, it was clearly not much matter who put his name to the document which conferred immunity upon the rebels; and besides giving them virtually what they wanted, screened the men who had slain our soldiers on undoubtedly British territory, to which the Boers had never even laid claim. On the 21st, the shameful Convention was concluded on the responsibility of the Government, and in accordance with its terms and instructions. Sir Evelyn Wood had evidently no more responsibility for the document than a private soldier, who, under the orders of his officers, burns or blows up a house, has for the value of the premises. Yet that twelve and a half hours' sitting of the Conference, with its resulting document dated March 21st, left a very bad impression on the Army, an impression which has lasted until now. and which it is

to be hoped the facts I am adducing will remove once and for ever. On the 22nd, the Government telegraphed its ratification of the Convention, which it might well do, seeing it was in every word dictated from Downing Street. One who was behind the scenes at the time has expressed his opinion of this Convention and the arrangement which afterwards resulted from it, that

"While Mr. Gladstone would not waste the hair of a man's whiskers for the honour of England, or to show the world that our soldiers cannot be slain with impunity while engaged in obeying lawful orders, he was prepared to force this Convention and the terms into which it was subsequently interpreted on the Boers, if necessary with all the might of England, just to show he would not be contradicted."

The Government lost no time in endeavouring to saddle Sir Evelyn Wood with part at least of the responsibility for the Convention of the 21st March. On the same day the message was sent ratifying the agreement Lord Kimberley craftily telegraphed, totally ignoring the General's repeated remonstrances, as follows:

"Her Majesty's Government desire to convey to you their high sense of your conduct in the recent proceedings, and the skill and judgment you have

shown throughout in your communications with the Boer leaders."

The next day brought the further information, "all your military arrangements up to the conclusion of peace negotiations approved," and this: "with reference to my telegram of this date, Sir F. Roberts, General Newdigate and Staff, return direct from the Cape. You therefore continue in present command." Meaning, if you raise any more difficulties, we can find men to do as we wish. But Sir Evelyn Wood was not going to let Lord Kimberley's attempt to cite him as approving what had been done pass without a protest. He telegraphed back on the same day: "Sincerely grateful to Government for appreciation of efforts in carrying out *their* wishes. Referring to words 'happiest results' &c., in my telegram of 5th March, I meant that a series of actions fought by six companies could not affect our prestige, but Boer leaders had lit a fire which was beyond their control, and would be quenched more easily after a British victory." This was letting Lord Kimberley down very easy. But we shall see that Sir Evelyn had not changed his mind on the subject.

On the 26th March, Lord Kimberley directed Sir Evelyn to proceed to Pretoria, the order being put in the form of a suggestion: "Subject to arrangement for the meeting of Commission, consider whether it would be desirable that you should visit Pretoria, to explain

agreement and confer with authorities there as to provisional administration." The rebel Boers were now elevated to the rank of "authorities." The following day this reply was sent: "Yours received. Sent yesterday to place relays of horses. Most important I should go when Commission meeting is settled. As entire distance is four hundred miles, you will lose touch of me for ten days." On the 4th April he reached Heidelberg on his way to Pretoria, and thence he reported to the Secretary for War: "Republic flag flying here when I arrived last night. Twenty armed men and two Boer leaders urged in absence of chiefs they could not lower it, but on my pointing out consequence, flag was lowered this morning." See what a little firmness and sense of public duty does even with obstinate ignoramuses like the Boers. He, indeed, threatened that if they did not haul the flag down he would do it himself. That might have been a dangerous thing to do, but Wood has never recked of danger where duty was to be done, and it would probably have led to a resumption of hostilities, which might have been rather a bad thing for the Boers, who were not anxious for more fighting, as they had been informed by those conveniently treasonable friends of theirs in England that they had only to remain passive to get all they wanted. On the same 5th, Sir Evelyn reached Pretoria, and left it two days later. On his return to Newcastle he telegraphed, under date of 11th of April:

"Personally warmly received by residents, but very bitter feeling against the Imperial Government." No wonder. People despise and detest a vacillating, flabby policy, even when it makes for their wishes. And uneducated men, like the Boers, were bound to suppose that the invertebrate character of the British Administration was assumed for the purpose of playing them a trick.

On the 8th April, Sir Evelyn Wood met the Boer leaders at Heidelberg. They apologised for the conduct of their Commandant at Potchestroom, who, by suppressing the news of the armistice, and concealing the fact that provisions were near at hand, induced the British garrison to surrender. He reported on the 11th:.

"Saw Boer leaders night of 8th at Heidelberg; they admit conditions of 6th March were not observed at Potchestroom, Cronjee having suppressed notice of armistice. They expressed sincere regret, and that their country should not remain under blame of having acted wrongly they suggested capitulation should be cancelled. They acquiesced in my replacing same military force, and will return at once all articles surrendered."

In the course of the next few days the Government at home were seized with a sudden fit of courage and pride. They resolved that Potchestroom should be re-

occupied, to strike terror into all and sundry the Boers, forgetting that the Boers had agreed to the policy in advance. However, there was this in it, that the leaders of the Dutchmen could not answer for their followers, and it was possible that the re-occupation might be resisted, not by the permission of Krüger and Joubert, but by Cronjee or some other such irresponsible person. Even in such a simple matter as this re-occupation, the British Government at home could not run straight. They pretended that Potchestroom was to be taken back for an indefinite time, but they issued instructions that it was only to be held for twenty-four hours! Was there ever such a discreditable display on the part of any body of public men?

As there were undoubtedly signs that the Boers might strike on this subject, it was necessary to be prepared for emergencies, and Sir Evelyn Wood was so assured that the position of Englishmen as regards the Transvaal would be intolerable, that he urged the Government to allow him to let the Boers re-occupy the Nek, when he was perfectly ready to drive them from it, and then, when they were beaten, to extend to them such favours as the Cabinet should decide to grant. This was his policy all through, and it was so to the last. His reiterated advice on the subject was contained in the despatch of April 19th: "I should allow them to re-occupy Nek. We are quite ready. This will give a decisive military result, and the happiest result for the

country. I guarantee we dislodge them." The Boers finally were of the mind that they had better not provoke the Cabinet which they had sure information was only too ready, as soon as chance offered, to admit the success of the rebellion, and to reward the Boers for having had the kindness to slaughter a few hundred British soldiers. So they agreed to the opening of the Commission. Accordingly, on the 7th May, Sir Evelyn Wood opened the Royal Commission; his brother Commissioners, Sir Hercules Robinson, Governor of Cape Colony, and Sir J. H. de Villiers, Chief Justice at the Cape, a person of Dutch descent, and one who had frequently shown that in his judgment blood is thicker than water, not having arrived, and the Cabinet being impatient to begin the work of surrender. While the Commission is holding its preliminary sittings let us take a peep at home.

The Ministry was being attacked for its chicken-hearted policy in both Houses of Parliament. A doubt was not unreasonably felt whether the Legislature was in a position to pronounce upon the whole question. It was judged impossible that the papers submitted to the public could tell the whole story. There was evidently a missing link somewhere. In reply to not the first question on the subject, the Under Secretary was put up in the House of Commons. Mr. Grant-Duff, now and deservedly the Right Honourable Sir Mountstewart Elphinstone Grant-Duff, is one of the most honourable

men who have sat in Parliament in our day and generation, and he cannot be held responsible for the answer put in his mouth, especially as it is believed that not even the whole of the Cabinet knew what was being done. The operation was in the hands of two or three men, who worked *en secret*, and did not even leave records of what they did in the Department concerned. Assuredly they did not take an Under Secretary into their confidence. Well, here is what Mr. Grant-Duff was instructed to say on May 9th:

"The whole history of the transaction in question is in the hands of honourable members, and we had no communications, telegraphic or otherwise, with regard to it beside those already published."

Nothing could be more explicit, if true. But I shall show that it was not true. For in the month of July, two months after Mr. Grant-Duff had been told to say what has been cited, there was "presented to Parliament," a paper containing portions of Sir Evelyn Wood's despatches which had been cut out of the papers concerning which the Government had made the asseveration that they were complete. But this is not all. Prominent, though subordinate, officers who were on the spot say that there were communications in the nature of precise and secret instructions which have never seen the light to this day, and on which both the military authorities in South Africa and the civilians felt

themselves obliged to act. I understand that they do not exist in the archives of the Colonial Office, and I have been informed that when the Conservatives came into office in 1885, suspicions being rife anent the truthfulness of the representations made to Parliament, an investigation was set on foot in the Department, and enquiries made elsewhere, for the discovery of the missing documents, but without result. Nevertheless, the documents do exist. Parliament and the people were deliberately deceived by a distortion of the truth, by statements made on the responsibility of Ministers—if all responsibility of Ministers is not now a sham since the disuse of impeachment—and, by a course of conduct which is not to be paralleled in the history of a free country, Members of the Cabinet sat by and heard the Under Secretary make, solemnly, a statement to Parliament which at the time they knew to be untrue.

And the attempt was continued to throw all the responsibility, under the guise of imputing credit, on Sir Evelyn Wood. So craftily was this done that it is no wonder the army believed he had acted in a way that many soldiers deemed dishonourable. I have shown that he protested at every step of the transaction, and his protests were not yet exhausted. The attempt was continued, among others, by Mr. Chamberlain. Speaking at Birmingham in the first week of June, while the Commission was still sitting at Pretoria, as it was to sit for two months longer, he said :

"When the conditions of peace were arranged by Sir Evelyn Wood, he had under his command something like 12,000 troops, more than the adult population of the whole of the Boers in the Transvaal." Inference suggested, he could have used them if he had liked. "I have used the name of Sir Evelyn Wood: he is known to you and to every Englishman as one of the bravest soldiers and most skilful commanders in the British service. But I say that, in my humble judgment, he has earned a higher title to admiration, and the respect of his fellow-countrymen by his loyalty in arranging satisfactory terms of settlement, and by resisting the temptation, which might well be strong to a soldier, of using his overwhelming force in order to avenge a military disaster, than he would have done if he had won the greatest victory, or had entered the Transvaal in triumph over the dead bodies of its slain."

I pause to suggest that Mr. Chamberlain, though of the Cabinet, was not one of the members of the Cabinet which "worked the oracle," and that he knew of what was going on just as much as it was thought convenient for him to know. I say I do not conceive that when Mr. Chamberlain made this speech he knew that Sir Evelyn Wood had repeatedly asked leave to use the force at his disposal, and had protested in every way in his power, short of embarrassing the Government by his resignation, against the craven policy he was instructed to carry out, and of which he expressly, on every

occasion, threw the entire responsibility upon Her Majesty's Government. The orator proceeded:

"While we were prepared for every emergency, we did not think that we were justified in closing the door to a peaceful settlement. The overtures for the settlement came, in the first instance, from President Brand, President of the Orange Free State. . . . In the second place overtures came from the Boer leaders. Mr. Krüger, their Vice-President, wrote to Sir George Colley to say that he was confident in the justice of their cause, and he was so certain the English people would deal fairly with him, if they only knew the true facts, that he was willing to submit his case to a Royal Commission to be appointed by the Queen. We thought that those were terms which ought to be accepted, and we instructed Sir George Colley, if certain conditions could be obtained, to arrange for a settlement upon that basis. Among the conditions the first and most important was that the Boers should desist from armed opposition."

Just so. But the Boers, so far from desisting from armed opposition, treated with silent contempt Sir George Colley's proposals, and when he, after allowing them three times the limit of time he had fixed, proceeded to do his duty, he was shot down with a large number of the other soldiers of the Queen. But this is how Mr. Chamberlain glided over this most pregnant fact:

"While the correspondence was going on, and in the midst of negotiations, the British troops unfortunately on three several occasions, marching in inferior numbers to attack the strong position of the Boers, met with a repulse. Those events were deplored by us as they must be by everyone, but they did not seem to us to constitute a reason why we should withdraw the offer which we had previously made. In those attacks we were the aggressors." It was safe to say this when Sir George Colley was lying dead. "But the Boers, and those losses, greatly as we grieve for them, do not make the original cause of the war more just," (was this Minister right then, or were Her Majesty's Ministers right when they composed the Queen's Speech? *see* page 123,—they could not be right both times) "or the prolongation of this miserable and inglorious struggle more desirable and expedient. Therefore when Sir Evelyn Wood, acting on his own responsibility, arranged for an armistice,"—(yes, an armistice for the purpose of relieving the garrisons until he was ready to relieve them by force, not an armistice because he wanted peace with the rebels till he had wiped out the stain upon the British reputation) "we approved his proceeding"—it has been seen that the "we" at the War Office had not precisely the same tongue as the "we" in Downing St.—"and when the terms of peace were arranged"—still, it will be noted, the insinuation that Sir Evelyn Wood had made the

arrangement off his own bat—"when the Boers accepted our proposals exactly as we had all along made them," but not until they had shot down a Major-General and over a hundred of his men—"we rejoiced in the prospect of settlement without the possibility of further effusion of blood, whether of Englishmen or of Dutchmen. We had accepted without a victory terms which were the best we could reasonably expect the greatest victory could give us." "We had accepted!" Why, just a minute before the speaker had said the terms were of our own making. But "we had accepted" was not used carelessly. It was employed as part of the plan of pretending that all which had been done was done by, as well as through, Sir Evelyn Wood. But there is something more to be said. Mr. Chamberlain had Mr. Gladstone's own warrant for the declaration that the Boers were not the attackers of Her Majesty's troops. Here we can pit against him the words of Sir Evelyn Wood himself, who, in addressing the Natal Legislative Council as the representative of the Queen, on the 6th of October following, spoke of "the attack on a detachment of Her Majesty's troops near Bronker's Spruit."

There was no little shock experienced by the public conscience when Mr. Parnell stood in the witness-box of the Commission Court and calmly avowed that he had made a statement in the House of Commons which he knew at the time to be untrue. It was astonishing to note, at the same time, the actual or assumed indif-

ference to this admission by some of the prominent politicians of the period. A most distinguished general is not, perhaps, so far wrong in his fact as in his derivation when he habitually deduces the origin of the word "parliament" from parler—to speak—and mentire—to lie. At any rate the astounding coolness of the declaration of the Irish leader, which made the three distinguished judges look more serious than even at any other part of the long and painful enquiry, seemed to show that in his opinion lying is a perfectly legitimate part of the political game. But if lying, in Parliament and to the representatives of the people, is not legitimate, still less is it legitimate when it involves the reputation of a soldier, absent in foreign parts, who has a right to expect that not only the truth, but the whole truth and nothing but the truth shall be told to the public concerning his actions, either as fighter or as planner, or as negotiator, or as ruler. Of course there are many things, in the way of intermediate discussions, which it is not for the public interest to have disclosed, but what can be easier than to say so? The plea has never yet been advanced in vain before the Legislature. It is an entirely different thing to say to the House of Commons that every single thing has been laid before it, that there has been no reserve whatever, that all instructions, telegraphic or otherwise, have been "presented to Parliament." If such a statement is not absolutely true it is most mischievous. The Queen's

Governments cannot be carried on, upon any sort of popular principles, if this sort of thing is to become common, or even if it is to be done with impunity on special occasions. And it is folly and worse than folly to suppose that Parliament can be deceived in the long run. "Murder will out." So will facts. We have got rid of the superstition that it is the duty of an ambassador "to lie abroad for the good of his country." It cannot be tolerated that Parliament and the country should be deliberately deceived on a vital question by false assertions, and it is equally inconvenient, to say the least, that ministers should attempt to shield themselves under the ægis of a trusted soldier when they themselves have directed every, even the smallest, particle of the policy and the pleas for that policy against the steadfast protests of the soldier whom they thus contrive to involve in the discredit of the transactions. It is within my knowledge that one of Sir Evelyn Wood's most distinguished and warmest old friends thought so badly of him in consequence of ministerial declarations, to the unveracity of some of which his eyes had already been opened and were to be further opened in the course of time, that he said in the bitterness of his heart "Colley would never have made such a peace." And to this day that eminent man has never been able to trust himself to speak upon the subject. But he will now learn, in common with the country at large, that the statement Mr. Grant-Duff was put forward to

make was untrue, not, probably, to Mr. Grant-Duff's knowledge, but to the knowledge of those who put that Under-Secretary forward to make it, and who heard it made. And I have to challenge contradiction of this assertion. There were other most important communications which passed between the Government and Sir Evelyn Wood, communications going to the root of the whole matter, which were not presented or even hinted at to Parliament. Sir Evelyn Wood has never opened his mouth, I believe, in reference, direct or indirect, to these suppressions. He has been content to live down the foul imputations to which he was deliberately exposed by unscrupulous politicians, careless of his or any other reputations if only they could clear themselves of responsibility for treason to the interests and the honour of the country. But that he has lived them down his repute to-day demonstrates. I cannot think, however, this is any reason for concealing the fact that he suffered sadly in the estimation of soldiers because he was alleged to be a consenting party to what was wholly and solely the act of the Government of the day. But, when this has been said, I confess there does not seem to me to be any remedy save an address to the Queen requesting that the suppressed documents should now be produced. Their existence became known through a mere accident, and if they are not in the Colonial Office, as there is reason to believe, they are not the only set of papers of public interest

which have been retired for personal reasons from the national archives, or improperly kept out of them.

On April 13th Sir Evelyn was appealed to by Mr. Osborn, the Resident in Zululand, to intervene in a quarrel between Zulu Chiefs; and the next day Lord Kimberley instructed the General to accept the reference, and call on Mr. Osborn to report the facts for his decision. It is scarcely necessary to say that this matter had to stand over until the Boer Commission had come to a conclusion, but it may here be noted that Sir Evelyn visited on August 21st, with an escort of 300 mounted troops, the Inhlazatie mountain, in Zululand, where he met the Zulu Chiefs and conferred with them, giving his decision, "as the Queen's representative, under the agreement by which the Chiefs bound themselves to accept the arbitration of the British Government." Sending his escort back, he went on to the chief village of the Swasi King to inform him of his future relations with the Transvaal. After some days with Umbandeen, at Lotili, he went to Delagoa Bay, for Durban, by way of the Lebombo mountain and the flats to the east of it. This service was acknowledged in a dispatch of November 1st, as follows:

"I am quite satisfied with the result of your visit to Umbandeen, which will no doubt have been very useful, and I think you have done all that was possible in the circumstances to settle Zulu affairs."

Meanwhile, before the Commission had sat for a month, Sir Evelyn found himself once more opposed to the views of the Government, which were shared by Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir J. H. de Villiers, his brother commissioners. He was doubtful of peace being maintained under the proposed settlement, and on both the 4th and the 5th of June he asked to be allowed to withdraw from the Commission. This was refused in a dispatch from the Colonial Secretary dated the 9th: "We appreciate your motives in suggesting retirement, but cannot accept your offer. . . . Our agreement with majority of Commission on boundary question does not imply any diminution of our confidence in you." There is a vulgar proverb that "Fair words butter no parsnips," and it was certainly no pleasant position for an English officer of high military rank to be kept sitting at a Board where his suggestions were made only to be overruled by his fellows and by the Government he was supposed to represent. There is no reason to suppose that Sir Evelyn found his position any less intolerable than others would have done; but he held on, perhaps hoping against hope, until the end came, which was on 3rd August. Then was signed one of the most shameful Conventions recorded in British history—in the record of that realm of which the motto, respected by every party between Queen Mary's days and Mr. Gladstone's, was *Nulla vestigia retrorsum.* That dishonourable Convention does not bear the signature of Evelyn

Wood, who recorded his dissent from it in a separate paper.

Thus we have seen that, from the beginning of his period of responsibility, Wood was in no degree responsible for any act or omission which was in any degree contrary to the principles happily recognised in the army, if not by all classes of what some one has called the "perfidious politicians" among us. His advice was systematically overridden by Mr. Gladstone, and so many of that gentleman's colleagues as he chose to admit to his craven counsels. Lord Salisbury put the matter in a nut-shell when he said at Willis's Rooms: "the precious lives of British soldiers were thrown away for the sake of a cause which the English Government had already decided to surrender." The only act which was not expressly dictated by Ministers at home was the conclusion of the Armistice of March 6th, which I have shown was due to Wood's desire to re-provision the Transvaal garrisons who were in peril owing to the failure of Colley to drive back the rebel Boers. Even if that act be considered as resulting from an error of judgment—and there are few men in these days who would have taken the responsibility of leaving the garrisons to their fate—the fault did not necessarily lead to the betrayal of British interests and the damnation of British prestige which followed it, and which no man could be expected to foresee.

When the betrayal was compassed, the infamy

achieved, the treason consummated, the politicians at home continued to beslaver Sir Evelyn with their compliments. It has been seen how Mr. Chamberlain had misrepresented Sir Evelyn's acts and sentiments at Birmingham, and Mr. Gladstone said on the 26th July in the debate in the House of Commons: "I cannot name that distinguished man without expressing the debt we owe to him for the qualities, both civil and military, which he has displayed;" but gave never a hint that the subject of his encomiums differed from the Government as totally as it is possible for one man to differ from another. Yet why, it may be asked, did not Sir Evelyn Wood persist in his resignation repeatedly sent in? The answer is not difficult to those who know the man. He has been distinguished all his life for self-sacrifice, even in a profession whose habitual self-sacrifice is scarcely appreciated by the country as it deserves to be. He would not abandon his post though he totally disagreed with the policy of those who begged him to continue to represent not his, but their, views and purposes. Nothing, even in the career of Sir Evelyn Wood is more highly honourable to the character of the British officer than this abnegation of self, always guarded as it was by personal and official protests against the orders he consented to carry out, and the responsibility for which he left at the doors of the gentry who are said, by a fiction of the Constitution,

which would be amusing if the matter were not so serious, to be "responsible" for them.

The disgraceful Convention having been signed, Sir Evelyn was free for other duties, and he reached Maritzburg on September 11th. As Governor of the Colony of Natal, he opened the Legislative Council on October 6th. On the 11th December the Government offered him the permanent-post of Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, which he declined, and on the 22nd he left the Colony and paid a visit to Inhambane, in Portuguese territory, proceeding on to Quillimane on the northern mouth of the Zambesi river, whence he went to have a look at Mozambique. Then he visited Zanzibar and travelled home, where on February 14th he resumed the command at Chatham, now with the "pukka" or "firm" rank of Major-General, to which he had been gazetted on the 12th August 1881. Under date of March 16th, 1882, Sir William Harcourt, as Secretary of State for the Home Department, made him an offer in the following terms:

"SIR,

"Though I have not the honour of your personal acquaintance, the great esteem and admiration which I entertain of the services rendered by you in the cause of recent events in South Africa induce me to make to you a proposal for which I have received the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief and Secretary of State for War. The post of Governor of the Isle of Man is

vacant, and, if it were agreeable to you, I should be happy to submit your name to the Queen to fill that office. I should not have thought of proposing to so distinguished a soldier as yourself a civil office if I had not ascertained from the military authorities that the temporary discharge of its duties would form no impediment in the future to your military career.

"Of course if any considerable command offered itself to you, you would be at liberty to accept it, to cancel it, and rejoin the Government when you pleased."

Although the post in Mona is worth £1,800 per annum, and the Chatham command not much more than £1,000, Sir Evelyn declined the appointment, and he began the spring by commanding a Division at the Volunteer Review. On the 20th February previous, he had been promoted Knight Grand Cross of the Order of SS. Michael and George, thus gaining the highest position in the Order to which he had been admitted a simple knight thirty months before.

CHAPTER VII.

IN EGYPT.

Arabi Pasha—Bright and Bombardment—French Fractiousness—The Facts of the Case—Sir S. Northcote's Views—Danger at Constantinople—Wood at Alexandria—Wolseley's Plans—Arabi Misled—The Fortune of War—A Brigade Eating its Heart Out—End of the Rebellion—Parliamentary Thanks—Appointed Egyptian Sirdar—Creating an Army—The Feeble Fellaheen—The Indian Model—Formation of Staff—The First Recruits—Very raw Material—The Cholera Comes—Charles Baker Pasha—Disasters in the Soudan—The Madhi—A Plucky Commandant—Gladstonian Vacillation—The Rescue of Gordon—Wood's Services—Passing the Cataracts—Advantage of Naval Training—Line of Communications—Chief of the Staff—Off to Gakdul—Wood fired At—Resigns as Sirdar—Thanks from the Khedive—A Grand Decoration—Thanks from the Government—Invalided Home—Empty Thanks.

On the 21st July 1882, Sir Evelyn Wood was appointed to the command of the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, of the force destined to operate in Egypt against Arabi Pacha, who had proved himself more than a match for his master, the Khedive Thewfik, who had three years before succeeded his exiled father, the Khedive Ismail, who had done so much for the material benefit of

Egypt, and towards its financial catastrophe. It is popularly supposed that the bombardment of Alexandria, which has been well called "one of the greatest political crimes of modern times," was almost an accident, due to the military preparations of Arabi threatening the fleet. Nothing has done so much to foster this delusion as the time and manner of the retirement from the Government of Mr. John Bright. It appeared from that as if the chief of the Peace Party had been suddenly outraged in his tenderest feelings by the bloodshed of the 11th July. But nothing can be further from the truth. It is true that the bombardment was not intended to open the campaign, but the campaign had been decided on upon the 3rd of the same month, and it had been contemplated, and in a sense prepared for, by order of the Government, from the end of June, while it had been reckoned with as "a military problem" for "many months" (see the official *Military History of the Campaign of* 1882, by Colonel J. F. Maurice, R.A.), and that must have been on the initiative of the Secretary of State for War, a member of the Cabinet. The French Government had also agreed with the British Government to actively interfere by force of arms months before; so if Mr. Bright did not know well what was going on he must have been kept deliberately in ignorance by his brethren in the Cabinet. When the pinch came, however, the French fleet did not come up to the scratch, and indeed

ran away from the scene of action. And the seal was put to the reversal of French policy when the Vote of Credit was refused by the French Chambers on the 29th July. Then, it is now said, the British Government decided to act alone. This is sheer misapprehension, for Sir Archibald Alison had left England on the 6th July, and Sir Garnet Wolseley's Plan of Campaign was definitely approved on the 3rd. These facts depend on official military testimony. Moreover, Sir Beauchamp Seymour, known in the navy as "the Swell of the Ocean," had threatened Arabi on the 10th, and communicated his intention to fight the next day to Her Majesty's Government, so that they had every opportunity of checking him if they did not wish him to bombard the city. Nothing but Mr. Gladstone's jealousy of "the unspeakable Turk" prevented the employment of Ottoman troops in Egypt to restore order. Four days after the bombardment the Government, with consummate hypocrisy, had joined in an "Identic Note" to the Porte, "requiring it to send troops to Egypt to repress disorder," when we had already prepared to act alone ashore if need be. No wonder the "letting out of the waters" caused great alarm in England among those who had some knowledge of the international situation thus created. The following extract from a letter written by Sir Stafford Northcote, who was before long to act as Foreign Secretary under the title of Earl of Iddesleigh, was given to

me at the time for publication, but I reserved it for various reasons, none of which now exist. It was written immediately after the occupation of Cairo, and may be taken as a concise summary of the true situation from the point of view of most reasonable men with a competent knowledge of the position into which we had drifted through Mr. Gladstone's persistent dislike to use the natural means for ending an intolerable difficulty, that is, the employment of Turkish troops:

"The military success in Egypt is of course a great thing for the Government. I still hold, however, that the Egyptian policy, taken as a whole, has been far from satisfactory, and that we have reason to look forward with some anxiety. The whole question of our relations with Turkey may, and I think probably will, be opened; and if it is to be handled in Mr. Gladstone's peculiar fashion there will be much risk of British interests on the one hand, or of European complications on the other.

"It is almost essential that the Egyptian settlement now to be made should give this country preponderating authority. But this will not be easily achieved without giving umbrage to some other Powers. Russia in particular is likely to think that she must get some counterbalancing advantage; and the direction in which she will look for it will probably be Asiatic Turkey. The Sultan will of course be in a bad humour at our success, and perhaps the Porte may not be indisposed to play into the Russian hand. Should this happen, we must

remember that none of the European Powers have any interest in our Asiatic empire, and that they would rather see us engaged in a conflict with Russia and Turkey than not.

"A firm and sensible tone six months ago would have obviated the whole of the Egyptian difficulty, and would not only have saved the great waste of life and money, but would have averted the complications which are now so likely to arise.

"A full explanation of the policy of the Government ought to be demanded when Parliament re-assembles."

Within a month of the date of this letter, I received a letter from an official of the Turkish Government at Constantinople informing me that the "perfidy" of the British Cabinet in regard to Egypt had led to serious negotiations between the Russian ambassador and the Palace, from which the Porte was excluded, having for their object the guarantee of all Ottoman territory by the Czar. The letter continued:

"The Russians are so keen on this project, which, however, originated with the Palace, and not with the Imperial Embassy, that they offered to forego the whole of the war indemnity, and to lend us sufficient money to enable us to make a railway from the Bosphorus to the Persian Gulf. They seem to have over-reached themselves by their tempting offers, and to have awoke the never long slumbering suspicions of His Majesty. So I think the danger is over, as neither Austria nor Eng-

land, to say nothing of France and Germany, could dream of accepting such a state of affairs unless beaten in a prolonged war."

Three years later I found, on inquiry at Constantinople, that my informant's information was perfectly sound, that the project, consequent on Mr. Gladstone's Egyptian policy, had been originated in the military entourage of the Sultan, and that the scheme came to nothing solely because the "Russian Bear" opened his mouth too wide.

It may now be seen how the policy pursued brought us within measureable distance of the greatest war this generation has seen. And these facts are mentioned here not in connection with general policy, but only as facts to be borne in mind when we come to consider the peculiar responsibility that devolved on us, in relation to certain matters that came to be very much in Sir Evelyn Wood's hands.

Sir Evelyn left Portsmouth on the 4th August, and landed at Alexandria on the same day as the Commander-in-chief, Sir Garnet Wolseley, though not from the same ship—he happened to have a faster one, which gained two days on that conveying the "Chief." Consequently Wood was not in the series of operations under Sir A. Alison which were adopted, among other reasons, in consequence of a telegram from Sir Garnet at Gibraltar to attract Arabi's attention to Alexandria by

"daily reconnaissances towards the flank of his position," following on one sent from London on the 31st of July, "keep Arabi constantly alarmed." Had the correspondents present but known the contents of those two messages they would scarcely have made themselves the gobemouches they turned out to be. It was not until the 20th that even Sir Edward Hamley was told of the true base Sir Garnet was going to seize on, though Sir Edward was to be one of the Generals of Division. And in the letter telling him that the real base was to be Ismailia were these words :—"When you open this keep the news to yourself, tell no one, and do nothing beyond showing as many men as you can conveniently in Arabi's front, and giving him as many shell from any of your guns of position that can reach him in his works." There seems to be a couple of words missing, but the text is copied from the Official account. Sir Garnet added : "I shall bring you on as soon as I can, as I shall want every available man I can get for my fight near Tel-el-Kebir, if Arabi will only in kindness stay to fight me there." It may here be mentioned that in Sir Garnet's original Memorandum, dated July 3rd, Tel-el-Kebir was named as the scene of the big fight. Unless the secret had been confided to Sir Evelyn before he left England, or unless he had guessed it for himself, it must be assumed that he knew nothing of the purposes of the "Chief" when he was called on by Sir E. Hamley to help in an affair the same day the latter received the letter, a part

of which has been already quoted. He had, on the 19th, led a reconnaissance with half a battalion of the 1st Berkshire along the canal banks from Alexandria towards Arabi's position at Kafr-Dowar, having one man killed by the troops which at this time were pluming themselves on always driving the English Kafirs back, and trusting to the flooded state of the Delta and the inundation in front of Arabi's position, to which, fourteen miles from Alexandria, the Egyptian leader had retired after the bombardment of the city on July 11th. At 4 P.M on the 20th, Hamley moved his two brigades out to threaten Kafr-Dowar, Sir A. Alison with the 1st Gordon Highlanders and the Cameron Highlanders forming the 3rd Brigade, and Sir Evelyn Wood, with the 1st South Stafford and the 1st Berks forming the 2nd. Alison, accompanied by Hamley, moved out from the Palm Grove at the back of the city and advanced across the dry bed of Lake Mareotis "towards the enemy's works, manœuvring there as if to attack the main front." Wood moved out along the Mahmudieh Canal towards the right of Arabi's position. The Egyptians, perhaps a little puzzled by the strange time of day chosen for commencing an attack, nevertheless evidently believed that the British infidels were going to make their supreme effort, and "opened fire from one very large gun, and apparently from three smaller ones, and also firing many rockets, which, as well as the shells from the large gun, passed over the troops, exploding

mostly behind them." The Egyptians, having developed their full force, the two brigades fell back without casualties, and retired within the lines. Arabi hereupon claimed a big victory, and that he should do so was part of the little game that was being played with him. He was being induced "to believe a lie" by the evidence of his own senses, and that he did hug the delusion to his soul is clear from his confession, after he had been for some time an exile in Ceylon, that he had never known of the transfer of the greater part of the troops from Alexandria to Ismailia, and had believed the latter force was a new body altogether. On the 21st the reconnaissance was repeated, with a similar result, and again the Egyptians scored a bloodless victory, which was celebrated far and wide through the land of the Pharaohs. Then the reconnaissances were discontinued, as by this time the 1st Division had got a good hold on Nefisha Junction, and had the whole railway from Suez, as well as the Sweet Water Canal running parallel with the line, in its hands, and Ismailia protected against an attack from the force lying on the trunk of the Sweet Water Canal between Nefisha and Cairo.

On the 26th Hamley became impatient of inactivity, but indeed he had been far from idle, as he had materially added, under the skilled eye of Colonel Maitland, R.E., to the defensive works of Alexandria, so as to leave the city safe with a comparatively small garrison; though Sir Edward Malet, the most able repre-

sentative of the Foreign Office, thought the city ought not to be left without a strong body of troops. On the 26th, Hamley opened fire from his two 7-inch guns to make Arabi show his strength in artillery. On the 24th and 27th there were skirmishes, and on the 28th there was received a message from Ismailia, which had been sent on the 26th, but was delayed by the telegraph clerks at Alexandria. This was the text of the message from the Chief of the Staff, General Sir John Adye :

"It is proposed that you embark for Ismailia with Alison and Highland Brigade (four battalions), and for the present that Wood with his brigade (three and a-half battalions), the Derbyshire and Manchester, two garrison batteries Royal Artillery, and Malta Fencibles, remain as garrison of Alexandria. This, with assistance of navy, is deemed sufficient, but before order is given state concisely your views after consultation with Malet. The police duties will be performed by the soldiers, and any marines or sailors landed to be sent to the front. Sir B. Seymour concurs in this. General Harman is coming to command at Alexandria, and a depôt of 1,830 men will reach Alexandria about 16th September. We hope shortly to bring on Wood and his brigade. Use War Office cypher."

The "shortly" never arrived. Sir E. Hamley wished, as the ground towards the west at El Meks was getting drier every day, to show Arabi that he could not with

impunity, consider that an exposed point, and he therefore contemplated having a little affair on his own account with the Highland Brigade. But on letting the "Chief" know of his intentions, the stopper was put on in the following laconic despatch: "No; embark as soon as all ready: desire Sir E. W. to remain on defensive and risk nothing." It was rather an inglorious role for "Sir E. W.," and not the sort of thing he had been used to at all; but the situation was none of his making, and his occupancy of the position was essential to the success of the plans that were being carried out, so to speak, round the corner. On the last day of August, Hamley, with Alison's Brigade, left Alexandria for Ismailia, and Wood took over the command. On the 10th September, upon which the garrisons of Kafr Dowar, the Aboukir forts, and the lines in front of El Meks surrendered, having been much weakened owing to the newly found necessity for Arabi to turn his attention to the line of the Sweet Water Canal, and to trust to inundations to prevent an advance on Cairo by the direct railway or the Nile, Sir Evelyn proposed to attack a force of the enemy at Mandora, and communicated this desire to Sir Garnet. The reply was dated Kassassin, 11th September, 2 P.M., and was thus worded: "You must act on the defensive and risk nothing until after my action, when I may be in a position to let you act, but make no forward movement without orders from me." Thus, by the necessity of

the case, a fine brigade was, as Colonel Maurice says, left in Alexandria eating its heart out, and no man in the brigade more so than its head. But this is the fortune of war, and, since the days of King David, it has been ever so, according to the ordinance which he made for the guidance of Israel, "as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike" in honour as in loot, for Moses had laid down the like reward (Numbers xxxi. 27) for all "them that took the war upon them."

The big fight of the campaign over, and Sir Garnet, thanks to the swoop of the cavalry as he had long before foreseen, in possession of Cairo, it only remained to disperse some stragglers at Tanta, which was done by Sir Archibald Alison, and to enforce the surrender of Damietta, which was committed to Sir E. Wood in the following order: "Cairo, 21st September. Take two of your battalions and Maltese Artillery and proceed by way of Tanta to the neighbourhood of Damietta to secure surrender of its Garrison." But the black troops there did not need much forcing. Their leader, Abdelal, gave himself up, and his men dispersed. On the 17th October Wood left Egypt, and twelve days later he resumed the command at Chatham. On the 26th he had been included in the Vote of Thanks in Parliament, and in November the Adjutant-General communicated to him the said Vote, adding an acknowledgment of "the energy and gallantry with which you

have executed the services you have been called upon to perform."

Just a fortnight later Lord Granville wrote as follows :—

"FOREIGN OFFICE,

"*November 28th*, 1882.

"DEAR SIR EVELYN,

"It is most important to get the best possible man to be the first of the English officers in the Egyptian service. Everything depends upon it. Should you be willing that I should tell Dufferin you would be available for the post. . . . "

After consulting his military superiors, Sir Evelyn agreed to undertake the task of organising a new Egyptian Army. Very few competent officers envied him the job. But the brilliant Irishman who had succeeded Sir Edward Malet had confidence in the appointment. He wrote to the Foreign Secretary on the 4th November :

"The Khedive and the Egyptian Government are delighted with Wood's nomination. His rank will be that of Sirdar, the highest known, and more than Commander-in-Chief."

In the course of the month the Sirdar left England for Cairo.

To the average man the situation was distinctly discouraging, and the ablest critics would not have

judged failure harshly, so manifold were the difficulties to be overcome before the slightest progress could be made. The old Egyptian Army had been destroyed, and we had destroyed it. The fellaheen in its ranks had melted away after Tel-el-Kebir like the proverbial snow off a summer slope. At the best they had been indifferent material for war, poor food for powder. Oppressed for scores of ages, their one desire was to live and die in the peaceful seclusion of their patches of fertile land of Nile ooze, upon which, as Shakespeare puts it into the mouth of Lepidus, the seedsman "scatters his grain, and shortly comes to harvest." Rather than go soldiering the peasants would pay the uttermost farthing that could be squeezed out of them by their half-bred Turkish tyrants through the torture of the courbash; for soldiering meant in the case of most of them perpetual exile to the far Soudan, exile worse to a most domesticated race than the death it almost certainly involved. The corvee, or forced labour gangs, were, in the eyes of the fellah, a sort of relative paradise, contrasted with entering the army. The pomp and circumstance of glorious war had no charms for him. He never saw that side of the shield. The army was to him perpetual slavery, without hope of amelioration of his lot. So far as some American officers could teach him the military art he was instructed, but they had little to do with him directly. The officers who had to do with him, for all practical purposes, were the half-

bred Turks already mentioned—Turks spoiled by a Circassian strain, crossed sometimes by Nubian blood. The officers were called by Turkish titles, pasha, or ferik, or lewa, meaning general of division or of brigade, and so on downwards, miralai, colonel, kaikakam, lieutenant-colonel, bimbashi, *i.e.* head of 1,000, major, yuzbashi, *i.e.* head of 100, captain, mulazim, lieutenant, and colaghassi, with the prefix sagh or sol, and in Turkey, at least, pronounced colassi, leader, of right or left wing, otherwise adjutant-major. The sergeant was shaush, or chaush, the corporal onbashi, or head of ten, and this in a country in which Arabic is the popular tongue. The words of command, indeed the whole drill book, were in Turkish. There was a good opportunity, in teaching the new drill, to change all this and make the drill directions in a language "understanded of the people." But the change was then not made, for, I think, political reasons. And, after all, though the men in light blue behaved much worse than the men in dark blue when they both had to fight the Russians in 1877, the Egyptian troops were and are a portion of the forces of the Ottoman Empire.

The first thing to be done was to arrange the organisation. Here the Indian model was followed, not slavishly but in the main. Sir Evelyn was of course Sirdar, but he was also his own Chief of the Staff. Yet he only allowed himself the luxury of one aide-de-camp, Lieutenant E. Stuart Wortley, 60th Rifles, who had

local rank as major. Lieutenant Colonel Fraser, R.E., had the local rank of colonel, and was Assistant-Adjutant and Quartermaster-General, while Captain F. G. Slade, R.A., was, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, A.A. & Q.M.G. Colonel Grenfell, of the 60th, now Sirdar, was a brigadier-general of Infantry, Lieutenant Colonel Duncan, R.A., was colonel and commandant of the artillery, and Lieutenant-Colonel T. Taylor, of the 19th Hussars, had his own rank as commandant of a cavalry regiment. Major C. M. Watson, R.E., was Surveyor-General, with the rank of colonel, and there were seventeen other officers, ranging from majors to lieutenants, who got a step of local rank as commanding battalions or batteries, or in second command, while some of them were supernumerary for obvious reasons. The composition of the army was not decided on without anxious consultations between Lord Dufferin and Sir Evelyn Wood, and in his recent exhaustive work on the Soudan Major Wingate states that on one occasion Lord Dufferin, "with apparently an open mind on the question," said, "Many persons argue that Egypt requires no army at all." It does not, however, appear that the remark is capable of this interpretation, for the very idea of the new army was Lord Dufferin's own. In due course it was decided that the force should be 6,000 men, subject to the requirements of the Soudan, and the main part of the force was to be furnished by the fellaheen. Sir Evelyn had, or thought

he had, reason to trust these mild peasants, for when Kafr-Dowar was occupied by his troops the day after the occupation of Cairo, according to the tenour of the Official Military History—the morning after Tel-el-Kebir according to Major Wingate—he was much struck by the demeanour of the veterans of the old army who had been garrisoning the fort of Aboukir, and who were so much chagrined at having to surrender without a fight that they sullenly "hurled their rifles into the waggons, tore off their accoutrements and flung them after them," before marching away in dogged silence. It was in view of the high reputation of Turkish soldiers (which Turkish soldiers deserve, but scarcely the "sheep" who ran away at Cerkovna and elsewhere on the 21st–24th September, 1877) that it was decided to stiffen the regiments "by the admission among them of the descendants of the hardy warriors who carried the standards of Mohammed Ali from Cairo to Konia." It was no doubt this better class of men who had stood to their guns in the batteries of Alexandria on the 11th July. There is on record the opinion of Sir Evelyn Wood that "he never had the slightest doubt as to what kind of soldiers he was going to make." The expression is a trifle equivocal; but undoubtedly from the first the Sirdar believed in the material ready to his hand. As soon as the number of men had been settled the governors of fourteen provinces were ordered to send to the Barrage, near Cairo, recruits pro-rata of the popu-

lation. This brought into the ranks of course men of varied races, Arabs and fellahs, Copts and Mússulmans. As they were mixed in origin so their value as soldiers greatly varied. However we had long ago solved a like problem in India, and if the troops of Bombay or "the benighted province" are not and probably never will be equal to those of Bengal and the North-West Provinces, why it must be admitted that the latter have great differences of value among themselves. And the problem was "tackled" on Indian lines. It was a good thing for the experiment that, in the first instance, the men selected "were of a finer stature and greater suitability than those obtained since." From the beginning it was determined that the police should constitute the first reserve for the army, a second reserve being formed from the police. That is to say, men were to serve four years in the army, four in the police and four in the reserve. After a while, almost six years, the service was changed to six years in the army, five in the police, and four in the reserve.

There were two brigades, each consisting of four battalions. The first brigade was placed in the very capable hands of Colonel Grenfell. The first battalion was under Major Chermside, the second under Major Holled Smith, the third under Major Hallam Parr, and the fourth under Major Wynne. The second brigade was committed to Lewa Shuhdi Pacha, and included the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th battalions. Count Della Sala

Pacha translated the English drill-books into Egyptian-Arabic; and the recruits under firm and kindly management speedily showed much interest in both the barrack yard drill and the bayonet exercise. But Major Wingate amusingly tells us that the use of the rifle was another matter; "the manner of holding it, the use of the sight, the importance of the trigger, were but constantly recurring novelties to them for a long period. When it came to intricate calculations as to the allowance necessary for a side wind, the question was summarily decided by the officer in command moving his firing party six yards up wind." Now the marksmanship is said to be very fair, and to bear comparison with that of European troops. The praise is not exuberant, perhaps, but it will serve to show what the advance has been. Before the force had been eight months in existence the cholera came, and, in spite of prompt medical organisation, swept away not a few of the soldiers. When the fell disease had gone, the work went on apace; and recruiting regulations were established, imposing compulsory service, though its burthen is very light, upon all males attaining the age of 19 years. They are examined by a recruiting commission established in each province; and only sons are excused, as well as those medically unfit, the remainder being balloted for in the proportions required. But the recruits are not taken away until they are 23 years old. From 1,200 to 1,500 men are required every year, and as

in the four years, from 19 to 23, there are always 150,000 men on the books, the drain on the country is very slight. The recruit, in the first instance, has to put in three months in a depôt battalion at Cairo, so that the fellah's eyes are opened, right off, to the grandeur of the capital of which they talk in the remotest districts with even more wondering admiration than the village labourers in England tell of "Lunnon." It is a matter of chance, at the expiration of his three months, whether the young soldier goes to Wady Halfa, or Suakim, or remains in the rich Delta. His pay as a private is the same everywhere and amounts to £3 2*s.* 9*d.* a year, besides a liberal ration. If promoted to corporal, he receives £4 18*s.* 5*d.* per annum. As sergeant he gets £6 3*s.*, as major £8 4*s.* 10*d.*, and as warrant officer £18 9*s.* There is a premium on election to continue the service, but if the soldier refuses he goes into the police. This force was originally organised by hapless Valentine Baker Pacha, who was succeeded by Charles Baker Pacha, whose autobiography will make a good bit of reading when it comes to be published, for he was originally in the merchant service, volunteered in the Mutiny days up country, joined the Bengal Police, and, on the 27th September, 1858, won the Victoria Cross by, at the head of a few horsemen, charging a thousand rebels, the feat being described as decidedly "gallant as any charge during the war." He served under his namesake, who was no relative, in Turkey for some years on the insti-

tution of the gendarmerie, and, like some of the other English "civilians," showed in the campaign in the Balkans that he did not draw a very fine line between civil and military functions in dealing with the invaders. Then he followed Valentine Baker to Egypt, and took his place when that sorely tried and most delightful man reached at last "the rest that remaineth." If the Army needs increase, owing to any sudden emergency, the police are at hand to fill up the ranks, and their places are taken by old policemen, who go into the second reserve. Is it impossible to carry out some such plan in England if we continue the short service system?

Native officers are carefully trained as cadets in a military school, somewhat on the Sandhurst model; and most of those now captains of companies have been so introduced to the Army. This is administered, under His Highness the Khedive, by a civilian minister at war, who has a vakeel, or under secretary. The vigorous training through which the Army was put from its first assembly soon showed excellent results; and on the last day of March Sir Evelyn paraded eight battalions and two squadrons before the Khedive and Lord Dufferin and the Ministers. The next day His Lordship, writing to Earl Granville, said:

"An amicable rivalry has been set on foot between the two brigades, one of which, as your lordship is aware, is entirely officered by Egyptians, and the other in the higher grades by Englishmen, and General Wood is dis-

posed to admit that the Egyptian brigade is perhaps the more advanced of the two, owing to the greater facilities possessed by its officers in explaining what they want to their men."

This was when the brigades had been only formed about two months. Just a month later, Lord Dufferin, being about to give up his post to Sir Edward Malet, wrote:

"My Dear Wood,

Before quitting Egypt I cannot help expressing to you in the warmest terms I can command my appreciation of the extraordinary energy you have exhibited in the creation of the Egyptian Army. Though not a military man, I am quite capable of understanding the innumerable difficulties you have had to encounter. I am sure it will be a satisfaction to you to know that the success of your efforts is recognised by every one, by the Khedive, by his Ministers, and by the European colony, as well as by Her Majesty's Government. That you should have been able to do so much in one particular department is in itself a most happy augury with regard to the endeavours made by others to improve the condition of the Egyptian people. The justice, the humanity, and the consideration with which you have treated your men have already changed the point of view from which the native regards military service, and all your countrymen are proud to think of the effect your character and conduct have produced upon all who have come into contact with you.

"I must ask you to express to your officers the high sense I entertain of the services they are rendering to our Egyptian friends, and to assure them that I have not failed on several occasions to make known to Her Majesty's Government my satisfaction with their work.

"Believe me, my dear Wood, yours sincerely.

"(Signed) DUFFERIN."

I have mentioned that the cholera gave a good deal of trouble in the autumn. Before there was any sign of it, Sir Evelyn had left Cairo for a short furlough in England. He had reached Port Said when the news followed him, and he felt that his place was among his troops. So he at once sacrificed his holiday and his private affairs, which at the time called for some attention, and returned to Cairo. Besides serving on the Sanitary Commission, he, in the same month of July, took charge of the Soudan Bureau: the moral of this remark lies in the application of it, as will be seen anon. What was done for the soldiers is well described in a despatch from Sir Edward Malet, which is singularly entombed among the "Commercial" Papers presented to Parliament, and systematically neglected by that, as well as too many other sections of the British public:

"CAIRO,

"*August 11th*, 1883.

"My Lord, I have the honour to enclose herewith to your lordship copy of a letter which I have received

from Major-General Sir Evelyn Wood, forwarding copy of a report addressed by him to His Highness the Khedive on the cholera epidemic among the Egyptian troops at Cairo. I cannot forward Sir Evelyn's report without adding a word to record the high admiration which the conduct of the English officers towards their men has elicited; Sir Evelyn Wood and his staff and all the officers have worked night and day at the measures necessary to ward off and mitigate the disease, and their efforts have met with an almost unhoped for success. Beyond the immediate benefit of the saving of life which they have obtained, an example has been given of self-devotion which may have lasting consequences for good on the promotion of the respect and regard of the men towards the officers. It is probably the first time that any outward sign has been given that the lives of the soldiers are of value, for, if attacked, each man has been treated with the same care that would have been bestowed upon an officer.

"I have, &c.,

"(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET."

Everything was done that skill, care, and forethought could suggest to make the young army fit for service. But there were able and experienced critics who saw something of the force who did not believe in its staying power. Perhaps some of the officers engaged in training were among these pessimists. Certainly the Sirdar was not. But the annihilation of the "army" of Hicks Pasha in the Soudan threw more than a doubt

upon the quality of the material of which the new force was composed. Nor was this doubt assuaged by the total defeat of Valentine Baker Pacha at El-Teb. On the contrary, it was intensified as accounts of the battle came to hand in more and more detail. The battalions there became panic-stricken at the first contact when the cavalry retired, and were "massacred without even an attempt to resist." What had been was only too likely to be again, whatever the training might be in barrack squares. But Sir Evelyn had faith in himself and his officers. He persevered, and though I am no great believer in the fighting capacity of the Egyptian troops, other than the Soudanese battalions, it must be confessed the success of the training was complete, so far as it has been tested. However, the supreme test was not applied for a long time. The Army, it was held, was for the defence of Egypt, not for the purpose of enabling Egypt to hold the Soudan. There the revolt of Mahommed Ahmed, the "Mahdi," was sweeping all before it, but not a man from Egypt could be allowed to go south of Dongola. The British officers saw the danger growing and approaching, and they offered their services over and over again. But they had their offer for their pains. At length there came a time when it was quite clear the Soudan trouble could be trifled with no longer, and an attempt was made to raise in Albania a brigade of Turks. No better man than Zohrab Bey could have been chosen for the task of recruiting

for the service of Egypt, whose troops, as has been said, are at least nominally part of the forces of the Ottoman Empire, some of the Albanian nizam. He was of a family long connected with the Levant, though he was born in Scandinavia, where his father had held a consular position. A perfect master of Eastern tongues, Zohrab added to this invaluable knowledge, tact, judgment, and the habit of command. Intrigues were at once commenced by the Power which makes it her business to thwart English action everywhere, and soon the attempt had to be abandoned; but not before a battalion had been raised and placed under Major Grant. This battalion was incited to mutiny, and Grant faced it single-handed, with no other weapon than his revolver, and compelled the men to lay down their arms, thereto incited by the fact that Grant had shot some who attempted to use their bayonets on his person. So this scheme having gone to smash, it was decided, not too soon, to raise a Soudan battalion. From the first the idea commended itself to those, even, who had been least hopeful about the fellaheen force. The men were mainly deserters from the side of the rebels, and having no domestic ties, were less averse to distant service than the meek inhabitants of the Delta. However, they soon took to wedlock, and were happy enough to get from the Government not only their own pay undiminished, but an allowance for their wives. Of their pluck no one needs to be assured who has seen them

come, under their savage leaders, at English picked troops armed with Martinis. And from the first they stiffened the Egyptian ranks in a very needful way. Their pluck is really one of their defects, as their officers complain. They are so fond of close quarters that it is difficult to restrain them until what may be called the psychological moment in tactics, and they are much slower than the fellaheen in learning their drill. But they have the invaluable quality of self-confidence, and they have given a good account of themselves and the foe, whenever and wherever called upon. Four English officers are allowed to each battalion instead of three, and they are divided into six companies of 126 each; the first battalion was Major Hallam Parr's, now in command of the Somersetshire Light Infantry at Aldershot, an officer who, humanly speaking, is bound to rise to very high employment. This Soudanese backbone speedily had an effect upon the soldiers from Lower Egypt, and before long we began to hear of emulation and prowess among the "sheep-like" fellahs. By degrees the Soudanese battalion grew into a Soudanese Brigade, which has been proved on many a frontier field to be worthy of all the confidence felt in it.

The Sirdar was, at the middle of 1884, in command of a force that seemed likely to be more ornamental than useful, not from any fault of itself or its officers, but because it was to be limited to the defence of Egypt proper; and at the time nobody had a very clear idea

what was to be the limit of "Egypt proper." A squadron, a battery and a battalion were indeed sent by Sir Evelyn in April to Suakim, and, a little later on, another battalion went as reinforcement. But the time was coming when the Egyptian army was to be of real use in a military if not a militant sense. After the usual amount of vacillation by Mr. Gladstone and his inner circle of councillors, a half-hearted resolution was taken in August to organise an expedition for the rescue or relief of General Charles Gordon, always with the hope, and, indeed, expectation that it would turn out to be unnecessary. The Sirdar was charged with the preparations for an advance of English troops up the Nile, under the direction, as was then intended, of Major-General Earle, who had been in charge of the line of communications from the Ismailia base in 1882. Sir Evelyn accordingly, on the 14th August, moved his headquarters to Wady Halfa, a few miles below the Second Cataract of the Nile, where was the terminus of a short railway built, like a similar small line flanking the First Cataract, for the purpose of facilitating goods traffic with the Soudan. The condition of both these lines was disgraceful; and when, later on, Lord Wolseley remarked of the Assouan line that it was the worst railway he had ever seen, it was drily observed that he had not seen the line of Wady Halfa. This latter point was the limit, at the time, of steam navigation. The native name for the Second Cataract is Bab-el-Kebir or the

Great Gate: thereby signifying that it is the most formidable of the entrances to the Soudan. On the 26th of August the command of the expedition, which should have begun in June at the latest, and for which all the plans were virtually ready by April, was definitively given to Lord Wolseley. In a despatch from Lord Hartington to Major-General Sir F. Stephenson, commanding in Egypt, the first measure recommended was "to provide for the passing up the First and Second Cataracts of as many of the Nile steamers as it may be possible and expedient." I decline responsibility for the grammar of this sentence. During the summer, when the Nile was at its lowest, Commander Hammill, R.N., had made an exhaustive examination of the Nile between the second and third cataracts, and had reported strongly against an attempt to transport the troops by river; and Admiral Lord John Hay, Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, advised strongly against the use of boats.

Sir Evelyn Wood had been at first inclined to avoid the Second Cataract altogether, and to recommend that the expedition should follow the route taken by General Gordon from Korosko to Abu Hamed. But when the river route was decided upon, he threw himself heartily into the project. He made up his mind that the steamers, or some of them, could and must be taken over, or rather through, the cataract. The senior naval officers thought this was impossible, but that is a word

not found in Wood's dictionary. He reported to the chief of the staff at Cairo on the 8th September, as follows :

". . . . . request, have visited rapids in second cataract, below which the steamer Nasif-el-Kheir is lying . . . . . considers there is considerable risk for the steamer, and some for the crew, and asks may we incur this. I reply, speaking for Egyptian Government, I will risk the steamer, and recommend risking the Royal Navy, but if this is declined I wish . . . . . authorised to help me to put the steamer through with the Egyptian army, and possibly some English officers on board. We both urge for immediate reply, as each day's delay adds to our difficulties."

Lord Wolseley reached Cairo on 9th September, and on the 10th appointed the Sirdar to be "General of Communications south of Assiout," he having been previously in command of all troops south of that point, which is the termination of the railway from Cairo. The General in charge at Cairo would take no responsibility for passing the steamers over the Great Gate, and sent the following message :

"It is impossible for me to approve the details of the work which you and . . . . are carrying out. I must leave it to you to endeavour to pass over the steamers or abandon the attempt, as you and . . . . can best measure the dangers and difficulties."

And Admiral Lord John Hay replied:

"The operations you are engaged in must be attended with considerable risk in any case, but under any circumstances, in accordance with .... instructions, he is to do his best to carry out the wishes of the general in command, bearing in mind that he having stated his professional opinions, the general is wholly responsible for what happens either to steamers, officers, or men. Please show this telegram to .... for his guidance."

Well, the operation was accomplished. It was done, as an Irish doctor expressed it, "wit' aise an' iligance." These qualities were more perceptible to Sawbones Bey than to me, and indeed the operation was so singular and curious that it was well it was so easy, if indeed not more so was the operation of getting a nugger, or ordinary sailing Nubian craft of some 40 tons, through the huge U-shaped notch which forms the eastern side of the bab, or gate, and over which the stream was running fast and strong the day Lord Wolseley went to see the performance of the sailor men, assisted by crowds of Nubians, sent up for the purpose by the Mudir of Esneh, and by a number of natives belonging to the vicinity of the cataract, who claim a traditional right to get vessels through or past the obstructions. I venture to reproduce a portion of my description of the *modus operandi*:

"I was in good time to see all that was to be seen—the nuggers being secured one after another in the deep smooth water below the Gut to the two stout hawsers, by bearing on which alternately as needed, or both together when required, great gangs of men, a couple of hundred each in number, could, with the help of huge leading blocks, walk away with the boats. That the least mistake was fatal was shown by the wreck of a nugger which only the previous day had not been properly steered—had broached on to the rocks, had been overturned, throwing her crew into the foaming, rushing water, from which they all safely swam to the shore like crocodiles, diving in the current and rising clear of it; and now all that was left of a 10-ton boat was some shapeless heavy planks and a shivered mast. But in Lord Wolseley's presence there was no mistake. The nugger sailed out of the shelter of the lower pool, and shook violently as she was straightened up by the hawsers and felt the great rush of water through the Gut, which is about twice the length of an ordinary English lock, with not greater fall than we often have on the locks of some of our larger canals or rivers—in fact, I have seen nearly as great a rush of water through a Thames lock after a freshet when both gates were thrown open; but the force of the fall was greater, the eddies were stronger, want of purchase more evident, the danger far clearer. The signal being, however, given by a blue-jacket stationed with two hand-flags on the same high ridge of blackened porphyry, on which Lord Wolseley and his staff stood, the nugger entered the pass and steadily went through it, violently starting

like a human thing as she felt now this eddy, now that main current, and always the compelling hawsers, the helmsman following his own judgment, but the strain on the hawsers being modified by a keen-eyed tar, who signalled to the officers in charge of the gangs. Slowly, and, as it were, timidly, she crept along between the generally rounded, but frequently sharp, rocks bounding the bed which received what Scott calls the roaring linn, and one watched her with curious interest, which had nevertheless little of doubt in it as to the result. At length, instead of a rushing stream the nugger had to mount a furiously curving, impetuous avalanche of water. Here she buried her high stem for a fraction of a second, and then, proudly rising, followed the line common to the two hawsers, till after a five minutes' combat with one of the greatest forces of nature, she swung round, the starboard hawser being opportunely slacked, into safety for the moment in a little harbour above the Gut. The total rise is said to be only 15ft., at high Nile in 170 yards, but now it is fully 20ft., and three-fourths of this is in the final climb, if the word may be permitted."

We had here an admirable piece of work done jointly by the two services, appropriately enough under the chief direction and on the responsibility of a man who belonged to both. Sir Evelyn had no fear of the responsibility. Such a burthen sits more lightly, perhaps, on the shoulders of one who has had a naval training than on one who has risen slowly to a position in which he is called upon to take rapid decisions. I remember a

casual remark of Lord Charles Beresford to the effect that the training in the Navy was better than that in the Army, because from the first moment a youngster, whether midshipman or even naval cadet, is sent off in charge of a boat, he is as much captain of that boat as his superior is captain of the ship. Thus, in the Navy, responsibility begins early and as a matter of course. In the Army, until now, a man may have had no occasion to form a rapid judgment on anything till he was a dozen years in the service, and his mental habits had become formed and fixed. Hence we have seen both in Egypt and in Manipur examples of dawdling, for lack of clearness and decision of judgment, leading to the gravest results. But the Navy sometimes dreads difficulties ashore. And, putting aside the admirable work done by Captains Poore, Montgomerie, Van Koughnet and others in steamers and ashore, it must be confessed the management of the nuggars and boats on the Nile was a triumph for the Army, and most of all for Lord Wolseley, Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir Redvers Buller and Sir William Butler.

Sir Evelyn was charged by Lord Wolseley with duties which were none the less difficult because they were performed without the stimulation found in actual contact with the enemy. In a letter written on board H.M.S. *Iris*, conveying the Commander-in-chief from Italy to Egypt, and dated 6th September, are to be found the following passages:

"I should like extremely that you would take the position of General of Communications, to command all these troops, and be responsible for feeding the Expeditionary Force in front." Again: "This position which I ask you to take is, I know, a most difficult, arduous, and responsible one, but its duties are those which I also know you could discharge with credit to yourself and great advantage to the public service."

What could the answer be to a request so handsomely put? Of course an assent was forthcoming, and on the 12th September there arrived a telegram at Wady Halfa from Cairo: "Extremely glad you accept." On the 23rd Lord Wolseley communicated to Sir Evelyn the following message from the Secretary for War:

"Very glad that you have been able to employ Wood in a post where his energy and power of organisation will be specially valuable; please let him know this. Hope Egyptian army under him will be utilised as much as possible."

Eight days previously the following appeared in General Orders:

"The Queen has approved of the following:—Major General Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.M.G., &c., now commanding the Egyptian Army, to be a Major-General on the Staff for employment on the lines of communication of the forces on the Nile, dated September 15th, 1884."

The result of his work at Wady Halfa, combined with the admirable dispositions of his old comrade, Sir Redvers Buller, Chief of the Staff to Lord Wolseley, may be summed up in a sentence: Not a man of us, even 1,500 miles from our base on the great Midland Sea, ever went without the material for two good meat meals a day, for nearly six months, while comparative luxuries abounded more than in any other campaign of the seven I have made, and the only things we went short of, with the Desert Column, from first to last, and these only for three or four days, were sugar and tobacco. So plentiful was the supply, indeed, that when we came away from the fortified camp by Metemmeh we had to destroy as much food as would have fed the column for a fortnight, and would have provisioned Khartoum for nearly as long had we not thrown away the chance of getting there.' This waste was due to the absence of camel transport, and was altogether unavoidable. But it was the only blot upon the system of 'feeding the force in front' of Wady Halfa.

It was not until three months had been passed in work at the Second Cataract that Wood received permission to go to the advanced base at Korti, and he did not arrive until we had started across the Bayuda Desert. Before long his services at and in front of Korti became indispensable, and when Sir Redvers Buller was sent with the Royal Irish Regiment across the Desert to rescue us from

the difficulties of our own making (as Major Wingate's book has now absolutely established), Sir Evelyn succeeded him as Chief of the Staff, in addition to his duties as Sirdar and General of Communications. A little later he was ordered to Gubat or Abu Kru to decide concerning the future movements of the troops there—movements which might have involved a dash on Berber, if the camel transport had been sufficient, a design which I alone was able at once to penetrate, and which not more than one per cent. of the column realised until it was abandoned owing to the impossibility of getting transport. The orders given to Sir Evelyn when he left Korti on February 15th included these points:

"At this distance from Gubat, and with only imperfect information before me, it is not possible for me to decide with absolute fixity, in complete detail all that is to be done . . . . . Such are the broad features of the course I wish followed, and writing here and at present I see nothing to prevent its being successfully carried out. It may be, however, that on arrival at Gubat circumstances unknown to me may lead you to consider it necessary either to abandon the advance on Berber altogether, or in proceeding with it to keep up at the same time some or all of the desert posts. I have full confidence in your military judgment. If, therefore, when you reach Gubat, you and General Buller concur in considering the plan I have indicated cannot be executed with reasonable safety, you may vary or abandon it as seems best to you on the spot."

It looked then as if the proverb of the wise king had something in it—"Where no Wood is [margin, without wood] there the fire goeth out . . . As coals are to burning coals and Wood to fire." Sir Redvers Buller at this time was junior to Sir Evelyn, and, if the dash for Berber had taken place, the latter must have had the direction of it. But, save once a little later, Wood had nothing to do with fire this journey. Approaching the Pools of Gakdul he heard the news that Buller was already retiring, because he had nothing else to do unless he had received a reinforcement of a thousand fresh camels, to take the places of those worn out from fatigue and privations. On my way back I found Sir Evelyn in charge of Gakdul, and right energetically had he set himself to remedy many of the defects of the place which the Guards' Camel Corps had originally put in order, and in which poor Sir Herbert Stewart had spent the last breath of his brilliant young life. Here he remained for a fortnight, covering the retirement of the Desert Column, and on the 3rd March he started for Korti, with all the stores that had been accumulated at the Pools, having previously sent to the base all the sick and wounded. On his way down he picked up the Heavy Camel Corps at some other pools we had not touched on our way up, pools called Magreikh, where Colonel the Hon. Reginald Talbot had fortified himself with a series of ingenious little pepper-boxes of rough stones on the hills surrounding the water supply. Here

Sir Evelyn, while inspecting the works, was fired at by one of a few Mahdists who had followed the force across the desert but had not ventured on previous contact with it. He arrived at Korti on the 14th March, and on the last day of the month he resigned his post as Sirdar of the Egyptian army. Though there may have been other reasons for this step, it is necessary to go no further in search of them than the announcement of the following day accounts for. Then he was appointed to command all troops in the field to the south of Dongola. It seems he had determined on the resignation for some time, as I find Sir Evelyn Baring writing to him on the 18th March :

". . . . I must write a line about your resignation. I think you are quite right to resign. You will be able to carry away the conviction that you did all that mortal man could be expected to do to make an army out of very indifferent material. I shall never forget all the support and assistance you gave me during a period of very great difficulty. . . ."

When I was up the Nile it was a kind of small treason to say a word against the material of the Egyptian army, but, before I came down, it was beginning to be depreciated openly. As a matter of fact, Sir Evelyn's decision had been taken about the time he left Wady Halfa for Korti. But it was probably then subject to the provision for the army of

certain things which the Sirdar considered necessary. The following letters from the late Khedive will convey as much of the facts of the case as it is desirable to enquire into. It is necessary to say that these are holograph letters, and that they are printed as they were written :

"PALAIS ABDINE,

"*Decembre* 24, '84.

"MON CHER SIRDAR,

"Je n'ai pas voulu manquer de vous écrire pour vous exprimer combien je suis bien peiné de savoir que vous êtes decidé de me quitter après cette expedition. Comme vous savez, et je vous ai dèja dit plusieurs fois, dit verblement, que j'apprecie hautement toute votre attention et bon soin et travail pour ma jeune armée, et le choix des officiers à qui je leur dois ainsi et rendre justice toute ma satisfaction. Croyez mon cher à ma sincère reconnaisance et toute l'amitié que j'ai pour votre personne. Vous connaissez mon caractère quoique vous voulez me quitter, mais moi je ne vous oublerai jamais.

"Votre affectionné

"(Signed) THEWFIK."

"PALAIS ABDINE,

"*Janvier* 10, 1885.

"MON CHER S. E. WOOD,

"J'ai reçu avec beaucoup [? dù plaisir] votre lettre et pour les soldats Turcs je suis entierement [? de votre opinion] et appreuve votre decision, quant au travail, de mes troupes je n'ai jamais douté du zèle et d'activité de mes braves officiers Anglais ; que je n' euse de parler toujours d'eux d'une manière très satisfaisante pour les

indigenes. J'espère avec patience et les jeunes gens que nous aurons instruit et en leur donnant une bonne education ils seront des officiers qui rempliront leur devoir. Quant au budget de l'armée je suis de votre avis, mais malheureusement la *politique* se mêle et on m'a demandé plus que cela, mais l'avenir prouvera que ce chiffre est bien inferieur; mais mon cher general je n'ai qu'a vous etre bien reconnaissant et remerciant à tous ce que vous écrit c'est très franc peutetre mème vos compatriots vous blamant.

"Votre bien affectionné

"(Signed) THEWFIK."

Some months later the following was received:

"ABDEEN PALACE,

"*April 20th.*

"Je me fais un grand plaisir de vous conférer le grand cordon de Mejidieh comme temoignage de ma vive satisfaction pour les services que vous m'avez rendus en réorganisant mon armée. Les insignes vous seront remises par le Sirdar Grenfell Pacha, qui part d' ici Jeudi.

"MEHEMET THEWFIK."

Lord Granville wrote from the

"FOREIGN OFFICE,

"*May 10th*, 1885.

"SIR,

"I have had much pleasure in forwarding to H. M. Secretary of State for War the letter from Major-

General Sir E. Wood inclosed in your despatch, No. 368, of the 28th ultimo, in which Sir Evelyn calls attention to the good services rendered by British officers, who have assisted him in the organisation of the Egyptian army. Her Majesty's Government fully appreciate the services of these officers, but their thanks are especially due to Sir Evelyn Wood himself for the energy, zeal, and ability with which he has devoted himself to a task in itself arduous and increased by the difficult circumstances in which it has been undertaken. I should be glad that Sir E. Wood should be made aware of the high sense which the Queen and Her Majesty's Government entertain of his services, and which they feel sure is shared by the Khedive and the Egyptian Government.

"I am, &c.,
"GRANVILLE."

In June Sir Evelyn was invalided to England. No wonder, after all he had gone through from December 1882. But perhaps neither climate, fatigue, nor illness had as much to do with his break-down as worry. He was the victim of a Government that was playing a double game, and issuing orders not to him, but that affected him, which orders it treated as so secret and confidential that no record of them remains in the public archives, and of course they were much too private to be made public by the party that "trusts the people." As it was in Zululand, so it was in Egypt. The Janus of Downing Street was secretive even from

the members of his own administration. But there was a time at hand for "dethroning the dynasty of deceit and imposture," to adopt a phrase of "D'Israeli the younger." On the 3rd July, Sir F. Baring enclosed the above F. O. letter to Sir Evelyn with the following covering epistle:

"SIR,

"It affords me special pleasure to be the medium of communicating to you the enclosed despatch from Lord Granville, as I have had excellent opportunities of appreciating the excellent services which you rendered when in command of the Egyptian army.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"F. BARING."

But already there was another hand at the helm of British foreign affairs, and this letter is the first I can trace from the new Administration:

"FOREIGN OFFICE,

"*July* 15*th*, 1885.

"SIR,

"I am directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to transmit to you herewith a warrant under her Majesty's royal sign manual, dated the 7th instant, granting unto you Her Majesty's royal licence and authority to accept and wear the insignia of the Grand Cordon of the First

Class of the Order of the Medjidieh conferred upon you by His Highness the Khedive of Egypt.

"I am, sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"J. PAUNCEFOTE."

On July 18th Sir Ralph Thompson, Under-secretary for War, wrote to General Wood, enclosing the despatch of May 10th:

"WAR OFFICE,

"*July* 18*th*, 1885.

"SIR,

"I am directed by the Secretary of State for War to transmit to you direct, as you have now left the Egyptian army and are in this country, the enclosed copy of a despatch which has been addressed by Earl Granville to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Cairo, stating that Her Majesty's Government fully appreciate the services of the officers brought to notice by you, as having assisted you in the organisation of the Egyptian army, and expressing the thanks of the Queen and Her Majesty's Government to yourself for your services in connection therewith.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"RALPH THOMPSON."

So now we have brought Sir Evelyn Wood home once more, and it remains to say that the money demanded for the Egyptian army has had to be given, *la politique*, of which the Khedive spoke, to the contrary notwith-

standing, and that the army now consists, not of the 6,000 men originally agreed upon with Lord Dufferin, but of 14 battalions of infantry, 5 squadrons of cavalry, 6 batteries of artillery, 2 camel corps, with details of staff, etc., in all numbering 12,633 men, besides 64 British officers, of whom 6 hold the rank of Pacha; 600 native officers, of whom 4 are Pachas; while there are 160 native officers on the half-pay list, and as many as 1,142 on pension, so that the ineffective list is even a more disproportionate burthen on the country than is our own.

In August Lord Wolseley announced the withdrawal of the Nile Expeditionary Force, and in his despatch of August 25th he thus referred to his old comrade:

"Major-General Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., was the General of Communications, and brought the utmost zeal to bear upon the arduous and difficult duties of the position. Our line of communications by rail, river, and desert from Alexandria to Gubat was about 1,500 miles in length. The responsibility of supervising it was great, but thanks to Sir E. Wood's ability and energy, and to the efficient support he received from the large staff of officers under his command, the army operating in the front was well fed and provided with all it required. The officers and men of the Egyptian army under General Wood's immediate orders worked along this line with indefatigable earnestness and with the best possible results to the welfare of the expedition. . . . .

"I wish also to bring to your notice the names of some officers who have specially distinguished themselves, almost all of whom I think it would be in the interests of the service to promote while they are still young and efficient. . . . . Major-General Sir H. E. Wood. . . . ."

I cannot find that Sir Evelyn Wood got any promotion, or other reward for his great services in Egypt and the Soudan. In October, indeed, he received, in common with every other soldier and sailor, the clasp for the Nile, refused to the pariahs of correspondents who had, nevertheless, acted under heavy fire in a military capacity at the request of two senior officers. G.C.M.G. he already was, K.C.B. he already was, major-general he already was. And he was no more at the end of his three years in Egypt than he was at the beginning of it, no more when he had finished his Soudan labours than when he began them. The recommendation of the Commander-in-chief went for nothing in his case. But I have an idea the neglect of the recommendation drew the two men yet closer, and that, consequently, Sir Evelyn did not suffer in the long run. The time was at hand when he would have a chance such as has fallen to the lot of many, but of which nobody had hitherto availed himself to the extent that we shall learn of in due course.

CHAPTER VIII.

HARD WORK AT HOME.

The Army's Chief Reformer—Setting up Supply—Teaching Night Attacks—Long Distance Rides—Mounted Infantry—Its History—Skobeleff on Sharp-shooters—Wood on Mounted Infantry—Proposed Scheme—Bianconi cars—Complimented concerning Colchester—Improved Fire Tactics—Transference to Aldershot—Decentralisation—The Army Service Corps—Useful Reforms—Economy and Efficiency—Feeding for Work—Improved Vaccine—The School of Cookery—Transforming Aldershot—Instructive Manœuvres—Soldiers' Privileges.

BRIEF, indeed, was the holiday that fell to Sir Evelyn Wood after he reached London; but of the last twelve years he had been seven to eight in tropical or sub-tropical climates, with the consequence that he had at least twice been ordered to England. Now he was to have a long spell at home, with work not less serious in its nature, and perhaps more far-reaching in its effects than any he had achieved in the field. It is not too much to say that Sir Evelyn has been, since 1885, the chief reformer of the British Army. In saying this, moreover, one does not ignore, or even minimise, the immense service Lord Wolseley has done to the land forces of the Crown, and the Naval forces to boot, since he has pro-

claimed the maxim that the first and principal service is the Navy. All that any man could do, tied by the leg as he was, in his official position as Adjutant-General, has been done by his lordship ; but as example is better than precept, so Lord Wolseley is the first to confess that Sir Evelyn Wood has " done more to modernise the Army, to clear away all the old bow-and-arrow prejudices that have kept us and still keep us from military efficiency—fighting efficiency—than any half dozen of other men " Lord Wolseley knows of. And it is worth while to devote some space to a consideration of what he has done and is doing, and has attempted and is aiming at in his work. It is well known to experts and in a sense to military critics, but the country at large has little notion of the silent revolution that has been accomplished and is still going on in military matters in England. Lord Wolseley has been vehemently assailed for his theories of reform. He has been equally blamed for not doing more to carry out his theories. One of the weekly military papers is never tired of sneering at what it calls " Ballyhooley tactics." But it does not condemn continental nations for the very thing it objects to among ourselves. Be these tactics right or be they wrong, one thing is beyond dispute ; what has been done practically by Sir Evelyn Wood is neither more nor less than what Lord Wolseley has been advocating in print and verbally ever since he saw the necessity of abandoning fossil futilities in military matters. And

now, at last, though "provisionally," we have in "Infantry Drill, 1892," the official promulgation of the new theories, and the chain of responsibility made complete, through General Officers, from the Queen to Mr. Thomas Atkins the younger, but not yet so complete in administration as in instruction.

The two campaigns in Egypt had shown that money poured out of the military chest in exact proportion to the unpreparedness of the Supply Department. It was worth the whole cost of the two campaigns to have brought this lesson home to the country and—a much more difficult matter—to some of the authorities in London. Hence, before Sir Evelyn Wood had been many weeks at home, he was nominated a member of a Committee devised by the Hon. Guy Dawnay, M.P., for the purpose of "drawing up Regulations for the Organisation of the Lines of Communications of an Army in the Field." That occupied a good deal of time in the winter, and it may be considered the first practical step in the reforms which have since been carried on. Lord Wolseley had resumed the post of Adjutant-General on 1st October, and Sir Redvers Buller that of Deputy Adjutant-General to the Forces on their return from Egypt, and of course their great knowledge of the subject was at the disposal of the Committee. In the following April, Sir Evelyn was placed in command of the Eastern District with the position of Major-General on the Staff. He was not long there before the practical

nature of the man asserted itself. He began to teach Night Attacks to his Command. He realised that these invasions of slumber must play a greater part than heretofore in military work. Considering how very nearly half-trained troops like those of Arabi Pacha had been to discovering and thwarting Lord Wolseley's well laid plans for the assault of Tel-el-Kebir, and that his plans would have been out of the question had he not discovered that the Egyptians were in the habit of withdrawing their tentacles at night and only feeling towards their front at dawn, the veriest tyro in military knowledge must see that if Night Attacks are to be made they must be practised sedulously until every officer and man knows his place and work in them, and knows not only what to do but what to avoid. Sir Evelyn first drew up the scheme for this exercise. The practice began in August and before long was "approved for the Army." The following month he obtained permission to practise "Long Distance Rides" with mounted troops. This has since been "ordered to be carried out by the Cavalry."

And here we have reached a convenient point for touching upon a subject of great interest and importance—the history and organisation of Mounted Infantry. The belief appears to be general that the idea of mounting infantry began and, so far, ended with Colonel Hutton at Aldershot. It goes without saying, that officer has never made any claim that would bear

any such interpretation. History abounds with examples of expeditions effected by the prompt use of quadrupedal transport in ancient and comparatively modern times. Not to go beyond our own island story, it will be remembered that Robert the Bruce achieved one of his greatest successes by getting his men over the ground more rapidly than by marching on foot.

"It was in 1332 A.D., that Bruce invaded England," in the words of a chronicler to whose works I was much addicted in the days of my boyhood, "and conceived the bold idea of ending the war by capturing the person of the king of England; and having mounted his infantry upon hardy, light footed Scotch ponies, he suddenly appeared in front of the English army, after a very rapid march. The enemy on this occasion were skilfully posted on the ridge of a hill, and could only be approached by a narrow, steep pathway. But Bruce knew better than any commander of the age how such difficulties were to be encountered, and while he sent Douglas and Randolph to storm the pass, he turned the English position by means of a body of Highlanders, who easily scaled the mountain, and attacked the enemy in flank and rear. The English army was soon routed; Edward himself escaped to Bridlington with great difficulty, leaving all his baggage and treasure behind him, while Walter the Steward chased the fugitives as far as York, before which city he halted till the evening with only 500 men-at-arms, to see if the enemy would

come out to the encounter. The Scottish army returned home unmolested, and laden with spoil."

The great Earl of Peterborough, of whom I have spoken before, also employed mounted infantry in 1705. An anonymous writer says:

"Having disposed of his infantry for the protection of Catalonia, according to the urgent desire of Charles, he resolved to go in pursuit of Las Torres at the head of 200 weary horsemen, although in cavalry alone the latter was 3000 strong. He accordingly pursued the enemy with incredible speed, hung upon their front, flank, and rear, and cut off their stragglers and patrols so successfully, that the retreating army were fully convinced that the English were in as great force as had been reported.

"This impression the earl also contrived to establish wherever he went; his handful of followers was invariably mistaken for his bodyguard in advance of the main army, and thus towns and whole districts were kept in subjection by the mere terror of his presence. His method of creating soldiers for this effective kind of flying warfare was equally wonderful. He sent for a regiment of foot soldiers to reinforce his small band of troopers. He had previously purchased 800 horses, and caused saddles and accoutrements to be transported to him by sea, and on the arrival of the reinforcement he immediately mounted the whole party on horseback, and thus in ten minutes transformed a regiment of foot

into one of showy and most efficient cavalry. [?] By a similar species of magic he obtained a respectable infantry from the provincial militia, and being thus provided with both horse and foot, he advanced to the desperate service of relieving Valencia, which was besieged by a strong force under the Duke of Arcos."

Coming down to our own days, in 1878 Mr. Archibald Forbes had a letter in the *Times* recommending the formation of a corps of scouts from the ranks of retired officers to do pretty much what some of us want Mounted Infantry to attempt. But I believe Mr. Forbes has since come to the conclusion such a body could not be formed from such materials, of which he has not as high an opinion as he had at the first blush.

Quite independently, in 1878, I sent home for publication from Pera a series of suggestions for a mounted corps of sharpshooters. It was written after a long conversation following luncheon in the Club Commerciale et Maritime—now the Club de Constantinople—with General Skobeleff. I remember particularly, on one point that arose in the chat, a dictum of Skobeleff that the loss of a General of Division was, at the critical moment of a battle, equal to the loss of a Brigade; the loss of a General of Brigade equal to the loss of a Battalion; and the loss of a Battalion Commander equal to the loss of a Company. On speaking of "cold blooded picking off" he said, in his matter of fact way, that, the object of fighting being to win battles, it little

mattered how the battle was won so long as it was won. My propositions consequently involved the following points:

"That a corps of marksmen should be formed out of volunteers, not necessarily volunteered to serve with the army everwhere, with special rates of pay, but not to be called out, save in case of necessity, for more than a month's annual training, and to be officered in the proportion of one officer to every ten men.

"That the corps should be mounted on cobs. . . the equipment to be as light as possible, but to include a set of picketting pins and a hammer, with a saddle valise for carrying a large supply of ammunition, and a leather case for the rifle, which should be of the Match Rifle class, and sighted up to not less than 2,000 yards with fine sights, that could be replaced, in case of accident, from additional sights carried in the valise.

"That the corps, being well paid for its services, should have no claim upon the Government save in case of disabling wounds, but should have servants told off to it in the proportion of two to every ten men, though the men should be bound to clean and feed their own horses.

"That two squads should be told off to each brigade, but that six squads should always remain as Divisional troops.

"That the sharpshooters formed in America during the Civil War should be the model for the corps, subject to the provision for mounting the men, who should be provided with not less than 400 rounds and

an entrenching tool, by which they could cover themselves in an open country.

"That no one should be admitted to the corps over the age of 23, and no one allowed to remain in it after 31, and that only the cadres should be kept up in time of peace, save for the field-firing practice.

"That a revolver and a sword should form part of the equipment, and that the dress should consist of a Norfolk jacket, a low helmet, stout boots, loose, or capable of being loosened, at the instep; riding trousers, not breeches; and a waterproof cloak, ample enough to cover the rifle on horseback."

I think now as I thought then, that there would be an ample supply of young Britons for such a corps, and that it would prove very useful in the field. The only thing I have omitted from my draft of nearly fourteen years ago is a proposition "that a specific part of the duty of the corps should be to pick off the prominent officers on the other side, while they might, exceptionally, be employed on scouting duties." The first point was inserted under the influence of a conversation with my Muscovite friend; but in justice to him I must say he, at a subsequent date, withdrew the proposal about picking off, remarking that some people might call it deliberate assassination, and not covered by the rules of war, a view, he considered, especially likely to commend itself to general officers, though, as the shooting improved, it would be found that the

practice of picking off could not be prevented and might as well be recognised as not. The other point, about scouting, I withdraw. Scouting cannot be done by sharpshooters, except quite incidentally, without sacrificing their raison d'être.

However, long before either Mr. Forbes or myself had moved in the matter, Sir Evelyn Wood had, unknown to me, addressed to the Duke of Cambridge a Memorandum on the subject, and had, equally unknown to me, delivered a lecture on it to officers of Volunteer Corps at the United Service Institution. Even he did not pretend to be the originator of the idea in its modern form, though he has proved to be the officer without whom it would not have taken a practical shape. The following citations from the lecture in question will be found interesting. The experience gained during the war of 1870-71, has confirmed the opinion long held by many soldiers that "mounted riflemen are now essential to every enterprising army. . ."

"The late Field-Marshal Sir John Fox Burgoyne, one of the ablest of the race of soldiers now passing away, urged a friend and junior in the service to consider and propose a scheme for mounted riflemen. He wrote: 'The art of applying mounted infantry to the greatest advantage is as yet unknown.' He goes on to record his opinion that such troops should not be allowed to grow into cavalry. He thought it was worthy of consideration whether cavalry should not be divided into

two perfectly distinct services—one of heavy cavalry to be held in reserve with an army in the field; and the other to be attached to divisions, and to partake more of the characteristics of Mounted Infantry than of the Hussars of the present day. With the wisdom of a veteran, when his attention was invited to one peculiar organisation of mounted troops he was careful to enunciate his opinions on 'principles' only, and to declare at the same time, that 'he had very little knowledge of the particulars of essentially cavalry service.' It must be borne in mind also that he recorded an opinion shortly before his death, that 'in this country the effective strength of cavalry and field artillery is kept habitually on too low a scale.'

"Before submitting my proposals, I asked for the opinions of several general and other superior officers, and I have found that while nearly all are agreed as to the necessity of possessing mounted riflemen, many differ as to the mode of carrying them to the scene of action. It has been urged against the suggestions I am about to place before you, that they are not original. I should be ignorant and presumptuous if I laid any especial claim to originality on this subject. It appears to me that to attempt to do so is absurd. Where many minds are at work on a theme some must seize the same ideas. My scheme is merely a return to dragoons proper. These useful troops have long since ceased to exist. Of course I do not speak of those cavalry

soldiers who were transformed by a stroke of the pen and a change of head-dress from nominally Light Dragoons into Hussars. The Dragoons to whom I refer were those foot-soldiers mounted on horses or ponies, who, on emergencies, carried a comrade *en croupe*. Such were the Dragoons created by Maréchal de Brissac in A.D. 1551, to serve with the French army in Piedmont. The Marshal profited greatly by this device.

"The first official record of such troops in our service dates from a Royal Warrant of 1672, which ordains as their arms—matchlocks, bayonet or great knife. On the 19th November 1683, the Scots Greys were raised; and you will find in *Grose's Antiquities* an engraving of the dragoon of that day, carrying his firearm slung on his back. Those raised in the first part of the 17th century are thus described by Lord Orrery in his *Brief Treatise of War*, published in 1649. 'Except in cases of surprise, they seldom fired on horseback: they never charged: they were, in fact, infantry on horses to enable them to make more rapid movements.' Père Daniel, who lived 1649-1728, in his *History of the French Army*, uses almost the same terms, and says —they were employed for the 'maintenance and surprising of strait (narrow) ways, bridges, and fords, and that one man held his own and ten horses while their riders were fighting on foot. . . . .

"Let us grant that spurs are necessary for cavalry, indeed for any soldier who fights hand-to-hand on

horseback, and this fact no one who has undergone that excitement can doubt. I, however, assert that mounted infantry should never fight on horseback; and when on foot, there can be no doubt, spurs are very much in the way. This is no new opinion. Waalhausen, who wrote in A.D. 1616, says: 'A dragoon does not require boots or spurs, for they would be a hindrance rather than an advantage while he is acting on foot.' I cannot improve on this advice.

"If we succeed in overcoming all the difficulties I have noticed:

"Reconciling the contradictory rules of moral training:

"Adding to an over-burdened man additional labour:

"Inducing the cavalry to put off their handsome, but for infantry work, unsuitable dress:

"How shall we add to the armament of the dragoons, a rifle which will enable them to meet infantry on equal terms?

"It is idle to expect men to be content with a weapon ranging 600 yards when their enemy hits them from a distance of 1,000 yards. The fact of great battles being still settled by rifle fire at 400 yards does not obviate the necessity of light infantry marksmen having the best long range weapon procurable.

* * * * * *

"PROPOSED SCHEME.

"The scheme I submitted last year was as follows :—

"1st. The Officers and men to be in the first instance selected from, and to return to, infantry ; they should join on probation for three months.

"Trained officers and soldiers of the other branches to serve at least three months with infantry and to go through a course of musketry.

"2nd. The men to carry on their backs the Regulation Infantry Rifle, which should, however, be shortened and improved and a better arrangement made for the back sight, and a sword-bayonet by the side ; to wear no spurs ; to carry a Hussar whip on the bridle ; to wear the infantry head-dress and coat, but trousers pulled up a little, and gaiters as high as the present cavalry boot ; gaiters with buckles and straps, or Wellington boots, laced on outside, to admit the foot easily.

"It is essential to maintain an infantry coat and head-dress, in order to impose on the enemy, as mounted troops are not feared when in small numbers.

"3rd. Drill as infantry, except that all movements should be by rank entire.

"4th. No polished horse equipment or harness should be allowed.

"5th. The high cantle should be abolished, to facilitate mounting and dismounting, or a hunting saddle adopted, no valises being carried on the horses. A leather saddle cloth should be used.

'SELECTION OF OFFICERS.

"Men who ride well, have good eye-sight, are ready, self-reliant, can talk one foreign language at least, have obtained a first-class certificate at Hythe, can sketch (very roughly), have gone through the short course of electric telegraphy, good regimental officers.

"N.B. Men who have hunted, or who have been accustomed to study country, preferred.

"Non-commissioned officers, active, intelligent young men, marksmen, the sergeant to possess a first-class certificate of education. They should go through the short course of electric telegraphy, and be able to read a map.

"SOLDIERS.

"Smart, intelligent, but small men, of one year's service; marksmen or first-class shots. Must possess a third-class certificate of education. If enlisted specially, to serve six months with infantry, or till the above qualifications are obtained.

"PAY.

"That of cavalry—but horses and saddlery found for officers. The number of marksmen to be unlimited. Every corporal in possession of a first-class certificate of education, to receive one penny per diem extra. Privates, one penny for second-class ditto, two-pence for first-class certificates, since their superior education

would render them, on detached service so much more valuable.

"ORGANISATION.

"The organisation suggested of 150 all ranks per company, would bring about 133 of all ranks on parade."

Sir Evelyn went on to propose that a part of the force should be mounted, not on horseback but on double Irish, or Bianconi, cars, which are now giving place in Ireland to chars-a-banc on all the tourist routes. These cars were tried by the last but one Lord Ailesbury for the Wiltshire Yeomanry, about the time of the Salisbury Manœuvres, and I shall never forget the impression their mobility made on me as they "flew" the rough places of Salisbury Plain after the fashion of Horse Artillery. But they were soon afterwards discontinued by order of Army Head-Quarters, not because they were in any way inefficient, but because they were judged to be not quite the thing for Yeomanry. There is no earthly doubt that in most countries where there are roads, or even beaten tracks, they would be an admirable aid to Mounted Infantry. At the same time they could never do the work that lightly-made men on sturdy ponies could effect in almost any country if only they would forswear the vanity of spurs. Not one in a hundred of them can ever learn to use the rowels, and the spurs are a sad

trouble on tangled ground. If we are, as I hope, to have Mounted Infantry in increased numbers, it should be laid down as an axiom that the only iron allowed on the heel should be a steel blunt point, like the tip of the shuttle in a hand-loom. This could not injure the horse, while he would feel it, and it would be no encumbrance even in a bramble-brake. The question of carrying the rifle on the man and not on the horse, insisted upon by Sir Evelyn, presented some difficulty at one time, and appears to present some difficulty to Colonel Hutton's men at Aldershot even now. But General Keith Fraser solved the problem several years ago, in regard to the cavalry, though prejudice has prevented the adoption of the invention as yet. And for Mounted Infantry the Fraser sling and bucket is just the thing. When the man is up, the weight is on the horse; when he is afoot, either voluntarily or compulsorily, his rifle accompanies him. So far as we have gone with Mounted Infantry, to Sir Evelyn Wood belongs the most of the credit, though a good share of it must also be attributed to Lord Wolseley, whose pertinacity when he was in Pall Mall caused the tentative adoption of the force as a part of the new Army system. It goes for very little, with me, that other Powers have not yet followed our lead in this matter. Even the Germans are not infallible judges of what to do and what to avoid, and Major Henderson, in his admirable little book on the battle of Spicheren, has

shown of what value a small body of Mounted Infantry would have been to General Von Kamecke at one part of his badly blundered action, which he won almost in spite of himself. Major Henderson's words are :

"A few mounted infantry who could have left their horses and scouted through the thickest woods, would have rendered invaluable assistance. Their equipment would have made it exceedingly difficult for the cavalry troopers to work dismounted amongst the thick undergrowth of the steep hill-sides."

In such an open country as Armenia, I have, for fourteen years, been convinced Moukhtar Pacha would have won the campaign against Loris Melikoff had he possessed five hundred Mounted Infantry, as that force would have been quite sufficient to have disputed the ground against Lazareff, when he made his turning movement down the Arpa valley on the 14–15 October, 1877 and took the Aladja Dagh and Moukhtar's three Divisions in rear, what time Rood and Heimann attacked in front what they had frequently found an impregnable position. It is true the Russians had received reinforcements, while Moukhtar's force was much depleted ; but it was Lazareff's movement that did the business, and Moukhtar could have prevented that with half a battalion of Mounted Infantry, to hold the ground to his extreme right until he had sent a couple of battalions forward. Indeed I have never

seen a country, except the swamps of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, in which a general with ideas would not find as much use for Mounted Infantry as for any other arm of the service. Only they must be infantry, and not masquerade as cavalry.

Mr. Dawney's Committee had reported in general terms concerning many pressing improvements, and Sir Evelyn Wood was appointed, in September 1886, President of a Committee to work out details of various schemes. In the following month the troops at Colchester were inspected by H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief, and the next day the following letter was sent by the Adjutant-General:

"His Royal Highness was very much gratified by all he saw at the inspection of the troops under your command at Colchester yesterday, the efficiency and general appearance of the troops being all that could be desired."

But a fortnight later arrived another letter which Sir Evelyn doubtless valued as much as the approval of the veteran royal duke. It was from Lord Wolseley, who wrote:

"Yours is our model District in every respect, so I send you the enclosed to read. I am very anxious generals commanding districts should interest them-

selves in this field-firing, for on the manner in which it is carried out depends our military efficiency."

The beginning of the year 1887 saw Sir Evelyn appointed president of a committee to consider and report whether for a service rifle the magazine should be attached permanently or semi-permanently, or be detachable at will by the soldier. The report was called for solely on the tactical question, without reference to the construction of any particular form of magazine or indeed of rifle. A couple of months later, he was told off to a committee for revising the establishment of the medical service for an army in the field. As if this, and the command of a District, were not enough to keep his hands full, he was directed to rewrite the section on "Outpost Duties" in the "Field Exercise," and this was evidently such a trifle in the minds of those in authority that he was ordered to draft instructions for the supply of ammunition to infantry before an enemy. This last order was, as the saying is, "rather large." I venture to say that in nothing is our military organisation more certain to break down in the field than in the supply of ammunition to the fighting line. It is not conceivable that the mule and handbag system will survive the first trial across a fire-zone against a civilised enemy. The very next month he was called upon to revise the Musketry Fire Tactics in the Field Exercise Book, though this was the beginning

of the Drill Season. In August he was made president of a committee to report on the difficulties in the way of providing ranges for Volunteer Corps. In a word, there was nothing this man of all work was not expected to lend a hand to. And yet he got through it all, and found plenty of time to take very good care of his own District. On the 4th October he was verbally thanked by the Duke of Cambridge for the state of Colchester garrison as H.R.H. found it on inspection, and the approval was formally recorded in a letter from the Adjutant-General's Department two days later.

But Colchester was soon to lose him. He had made it, his native District, the model District, as Lord Wolseley had officially written. He was recommended to succeed Sir Archibald Alison in the command of Aldershot. Will it be believed that there was a great indisposition shown to sanction the transfer from Colchester? The claims of seniority were so sacred, under the circumstances, that selection was to go to the wall, if selection meant the choice of the man conspicuously singled out for the work which the progress of our army now rendered indispensable at our chief camp. One of the stoutest and strongest and longest fights known in Pall Mall took place around the question of the Aldershot command. It is the blue ribbon of the English military Districts. For now the command at Aldershot includes the command of the First Army Corps for foreign service.

At length the contest was finished; and it resulted in the appointment looked forward to with so much hope by the reformers in the army. Mr. Stanhope has recently triumphantly retorted on these reformers that they are not agreed upon what they want, and are at sixes and sevens among each other. This is in the necessity of the case. But Sir Evelyn Wood has always known what he wants. If he has any far-reaching schemes he conceals them effectually from his most intimate friends. He works at what is within reach. That is the secret of his success, and of his popularity among the old as well as the young school in the service. Whatsoever his hand findeth to do he doeth with his might. There is nothing too small for his personal attention. Mountains are made of atoms. Rome was not built in a day. Here a little and there a little, as the prophet Isaiah put it. Continual dropping wears away the hardest stone—even the obstinacy of the warriors who, like the Bourbons, never learn anything, and never forget anything. Everybody recognises Sir Evelyn's single-mindedness even when least agreeing with him. His one idea is the well-being of the service. He "gets on" with the most diverse folk. He can hit hard when he likes, but he rarely likes, in these latter days at least. If a man is a worker, the good that is in him will be brought out, and so long as it is possible he will be not only allowed but encouraged to work in the way he can work best. All this has been seen at Alder-

shot most conspicuously. It is over three years since he went to Aldershot. It is no exaggeration to say they are the most eventful three years in the modern history of the army. A revolution has taken place in the command—a silent, but not less thorough revolution—which has caused a perhaps unconscious progress in other commands. In some it has avowedly been imitated. In the words of the one man most conspicuously able to judge, Sir Evelyn "has done more to modernise the army, to clear away all the old bow-and-arrow prejudices that have kept us, and still keep us from military efficiency—fighting efficiency—than any other half-dozen men I know."

And the first thing that deserves to be noticed is the decentralisation that has been effected in the instruction, and is now officially, though as yet "provisionally," recognised. The old theory was that instruction was not much the business of anybody but the commanding officer of a battalion and the adjutant and sergeant-major. So far as company instruction was concerned it was left pretty much in the hands of colour-sergeants. Now all that has been changed. It is going to be changed even in the Guards as soon as quarters have been provided for company officers. At Aldershot the captain of a company is made personally responsible as in the German army, and as he should be in any common-sense army, not only for the discipline and the interior economy of the company, but the training also.

It is to him that the men look for all that finer kind of tuition which follows the mere goose-step and squad era in the military career. He has to see and even himself teach, everything that is required by the soldier in the way of knowledge, how to conduct himself in the field. Mr. Spencer Wilkinson, in his thoughtful little book, *The Brain of an Army*, puts the German system in a nutshell when he says :

"Responsibility and authority begin with the smallest units, the company, squadron or battery. The captain, the commander of such a unit, is the lowest officer who has the power of punishment."

The reader who knows something of Germany will note the word "power."

"In his hands lies in peace the training, and in war the leading of the company, squadron, or battery. The lieutenants, and in a lower sphere the non-commissioned officers, are his assistants acting under his responsibility. In the company, to take the infantry as the type, the captain is supreme. The methods of instruction, the distribution of time, and the order to be followed in the process are matters which he settles according to his own judgment. His superiors abstain from any interference. They are concerned only with the result, of which they satisfy themselves by inspection at the end of the period assigned to company training. If any of the soldiers have not been properly instructed, or if the

company is not fit to take its place in the battalion, that is the captain's fault, and he is likely to lose his chance of promotion."

Major Henderson's description is not less clear and succinct:

"The higher authorities consistently maintain the high position of the company commander, and crush every attempt to curtail his prerogatives or to lessen his responsibilities. From the first day the recruit falls in upon the barrack square he is under the eye of his captain. The whole of his military knowledge, his rewards and his advancement, he owes to the officers of his own company. For the economical administration of his command, for its comfort and well-being as well as its efficiency, the captain bears the sole responsibility. On the bonds thus created between officers and men may be cited the opinion of a well-known Prussian author:—'The captain is the only officer between whom and the soldier a personal relation exists in peace time. He knows every individual soldier in the most intimate manner, and the soldier, on his part, is well aware that his captain so knows him. It is upon this relation that the common influence rests, which he, above all other officers, has over the individual soldier as well as over the whole company.'"

The wholesale adoption of German customs has been carried quite far enough in this country by those who

have not recognised the essential difference between a volunteer and a compulsory service army. 'In some respects it has been carried to a ridiculous extent, and the difference in the soil is quite sufficient to account for the failure of the attempt to transplant. So this treatment of the company as the unit of instruction and discipline has been adapted, rather than adopted, at Aldershot. We wear our rue with a difference. But, so far as is possible in an army where men and officers are constantly changing even during the drill season, we have taken over at Aldershot the essential principle of the German company. Indeed it is encouraged so far, this responsibility of the company commander for the company training, that I heard towards the end of the late drill season of a captain who saw a junior staff-officer hanging about a seven o'clock parade ground and went up to him requesting him to go away, lest his mere presence should seem to impugn the Home Rule principle of the company. When the matter was reported, the action of the captain was approved. It is possible that the system has been carried as far in our service as the genius of our voluntary system will permit; but there can be no question about the improvement in the working of battalions since the present style was taken in hand. The commanding officer and the adjutant have less work and worry thrown upon them, and have more time to study the details of battalion command and developed tactics. This is one of the

best pieces of work to be mentioned as a consequence of Sir Evelyn Wood's tenure of the Aldershot command. And, as has been hinted above, the influence of the teaching has not been confined to regiments and battalions that have had their training at Aldershot. There has been a gradual levelling-up even in districts in which it is thought a mark of superiority to keep to the old paths, and shun anything new like the whispering of the evil one, unless it is to be found laid down in rigid black and white in some volume of red sheep. And now the principle has been laid down, and in red sheep.

As he has done with the company officers, taking them out of the hands of the colonels and adjutants, so has Sir Evelyn managed to break down the professional shyness of the field officers. When he first went to the greatest standing camp, though, perhaps, Aldershot may soon have to surrender its pride of place to the Curragh, War Games were sometimes played. But practically no interest was taken in them. People did not believe in learning war "over a paper country." The new general saw that an ounce of example was worth a pound of precept, so he and his brigade commanders took to playing war-games on big maps frequently among themselves, and in a short time colonels and majors felt the desire to emulate the victories and defeats of their seniors. It is scarcely going too far to say that nowhere, not even in Westminster Town Hall, is the War Game

played in this country so frequently or enthusiastically as in the Aldershot Club House. And the mention of this edifice leads me to note that in January 1890, the Club was over head and ears in debt. Sir Evelyn took it in hand. It is now a flourishing institution, a very pivot of a good deal of the life of Aldershot.

Perhaps the most striking of his improvements is that in connection with the Army Service Corps. This body, the re-creation of the former Commissariat and Transport Department, is the child of General Sir Redvers Buller, the Adjutant-General, when he was Quartermaster-General. On it he spent much time and pains, and brought to bear the experience both of one who had suffered from the confusion incidental to the old system, and of one who, when Chief of the Staff, had to organise the greatest Supply work that had ever been attempted in respect of distance and difficulty. The Royal Warrant constituting the Corps had been issued on December 11th, 1888, so that it had been little more than a year in existence when Sir Evelyn went to Aldershot, and it may be said truly enough to have had but little chance of success in that twelvemonth. It was a strange bantling, in which nobody felt bound to have any more interest than lay strictly in the way of duty. The new chief made up his mind to change all that. He brought to the task of helping the A.S.C. to achieve its purpose—and what a task it was is known to a good many people now—the happiest personal relations

with Sir Redvers Buller, his old associate in Ashantee, Zululand, in Boerland, and on the Nile.

He had the advantage of soon obtaining as his second Adjutant-General, or Quartermaster-General, a Staff College graduate who had, as Colonel of the Royal Irish Rifles, won a reputation for his care of his men, and who, at Candahar, had seen the outcome of the work of the Indian supply system, before, during and after the famous or infamous break-down of camel transport. He had also, as the head of the branch of the Corps stationed at Aldershot, a practical farmer in the person of Colonel Grattan, one of the most intelligent and indefatigable of Irishmen, and one of the men who never think anything is done so long as aught, however slight, remains to be done. The three men thoroughly understood one another, and they set themselves to the Herculean task of breaking down the contract system which had fastened its grip on not only the British Army but the British tax-payer. Hay and oats were supplied by contract, and while the last farthing was screwed out of the farmer, the worst possible stuff that could be passed, under the eyes of a not too vigilant and not too well-informed body of officers, was supplied to the service. Now the Army Service Corps buys its own oats in Mark Lane, to the great advantage of the public, both as regards price and quality. A large proportion of the hay is bought from farmers in the neighbourhood, and what cannot be got there is bought by A.S.C. officers

elsewhere. The outcome of the system, so far as it has been developed, and it is still in the tentative state, is that not A.S.C. officers, but the officers of the Division generally get to learn in peace a most essential part of their work in war. The horses are well fed, and get their full allowance, as no one has any longer any interest in depriving them of a single oat. The price of hay and oats has fallen all over the country, because contractors are, with reason, afraid that the Aldershot system will soon be introduced everywhere. Meat is at present got by contract, but the end of the system is at hand. While it lasts, however, its dangerous elements are reduced to a minimum by the most rigid and careful inspection. Regimental officers are now understood to appreciate the great advantages of the new Supply work, and to encourage their subordinate officers and men to lend the A.S.C. every assistance in their power. Officers are detached to the A.S.C., or sent to London, to take a course of lessons in judging the quality of supplies, and in a very few years it will be thought as much to the discredit of an officer to be ignorant of the quality and fair cost of supplies as it is now to know nothing of his squadron, battery, or company drill. Another important principle has been laid down in the course of the experimental A.S.C. work at Aldershot, that is, to feed horses according to the work they have to do. I can well remember the horror of an excellent friend of mine, a cavalry officer, with whom I was lunching, when he

received the order to reduce, as an experiment, the ration of oats and hay during the winter, so as to have a reserve for the drill season when, instead of standing or lying idle in stables, his steeds would have to pay for their keep. But he is a loyal officer, and on the whole he leans to the forward school in the army. So, though he at first reported against the experiment, which was indeed carried too far; he is now one of the warmest advocates of "feeding for work." The ration for animals in the service is ample if it be properly husbanded, and now when animals are called on for hard work they can get extra rations to the extent of from two to six pounds of oats a day, according to the economy which has been exercised, and the nature of the task to be imposed upon them. All this is done out of what used to be simply wasted in stable, or "missing" in other ways. Classes for the instruction of officers in the purchase of supplies are now a regular feature of the Aldershot training.

One of Sir Evelyn's first cares at Aldershot was to superintend the commencement of an institution for the supply of pure vaccine matter throughout the service. Before its establishment the lymph purchased by the Medical Department in the camp cost £250 per annum, only a small quantity of doubtful source being obtained, the balance of the vaccinations being with difficulty kept up by arm to arm transfer. Now the great bulk, if not yet the whole, of the vaccinations in the service are from

animal lymph, the cost of it being £80 a year. Up to the 10th November, 1891, material had been prepared at Aldershot for 98,168 people, the cost of which has, all told, been £213, though in the open market it would have cost £4,900. Down to the end of 1891 material had been issued for 104,000 vaccinations, and this without the occurrence of one single case of contamination, or blood poisoning in any shape, such as the patients were liable to under the old system. The lymph is prepared under the personal care of Veterinary Captain F. Smith, Professor of the Army Veterinary School, who issues daily lymph sufficient for three hundred people.

Sir Evelyn's care for the soldier is limited in no sense whatever. He took the School of Cookery under his observation from the first, and consequently the feeding of the soldier has greatly improved throughout the army. If he could procure for Mr. Atkins a free vegetable ration, and, when on field duty, a free grocery ration, he believes the lot of the British private would leave little ground for complaint. He personally selected the sites for the new buildings which are transforming the face of Aldershot, and he took especial care to see that the barracks should have proper recreation rooms and canteens, so far as could be provided out of the sums allowed. The accommodation in these new barracks and huts will be equal to that of the best military edifices in the world. He has brightened the Cambridge Hospital

by starting a fund for the purchase of pictures to adorn the walls, and has secured presentation portraits of nearly all the Royal Family for the various wards. He has recently started a Games Fund, out of which all sorts of games are purchased for the amusement of the patients. A still more notable attempt to alleviate the lot of the suffering was the purchase of a piano for the Hospital, and, under the auspices of himself and the Hon. Lady Wood, weekly concerts for the sick were started, and much appreciated. He has the beer in the canteens and the milk served to the men analysed at uncertain times, and his plan of canteen management, which he started at Colchester, has resulted at Aldershot in not only an improvement in the quality of the beer but in a much greater profit to the canteen funds, which are expended for the benefit of the men. He is very particular that the soldier shall have proper clothing in winter, and that old clothing is kept for hard or dirty work, so that the men are not put to any cost for drills and manœuvres.

In the matter of manœuvres he has left his mark not on Aldershot only, but on the army. In 1890 he utilised the Government ground at Woolmer Forest for infantry work over a region known to but few of the officers, and to none of the troops. The weather was vile in the extreme, but a good deal of instruction was afforded. Somewhat later he took six cavalry regiments to the west of Berkshire, where, on the downs flanking

the Vale of the White Horse, he carried out a series of experiments which at least showed that the manœuvres were very necessary to our English cavalry which so seldom gets an opportunity of working together on an adequate scale. In 1891, it was found impossible, owing to shooting rights, to obtain proper ground for cavalry work, but he brought together six regiments, of whom three remained in barracks at Aldershot, while three others, under General le Quesne, encamped at Bourley, on the London and Winchester road, and the daily contact was on or near Frensham common, a very rough piece of ground lying between the two camps. Objection having been made the previous year to the cavalry manœuvres taking place under what it pleased some folks to term an infantry general, the Horse Guards gave the direction over to Major-General Keith Fraser, C.M.G., the Inspector General of Cavalry, but Sir Evelyn was frequently on the ground, with his keen eye "all over the place," as one expressed it. Later in the year he took two Divisions to the South Downs, where were held the most instructive set of manœuvres yet seen in England, in spite of many drawbacks, chiefly on account of the weather, which ultimately caused the abandonment of the programme before it was more than two-thirds completed. It was here that the advantage of the new Aldershot training came out. Troops, though good, who had not passed through it, were so obviously inferior to those who had, that the Aldershot work stood at

once vindicated. Some of the best officers in England held and hold that no proper manœuvres can be held in England without the passing of a Manœuvre Act, to give power to the military authorities to take what ground they want for such purposes; subject of course to compensation for injury done to the occupiers. I cannot see the use of such an Act of Parliament unless the Treasury can be induced to set aside a much greater sum each year than it has ever yet been prevailed upon to allot. Until this is done, Sir Evelyn Wood, and he alone, has found the solution of the difficulty. With a very small allowance, which has not been exceeded, he has managed to do something to remove from the British Army the reproach that it knows no instruction or practice, save against savages, outside the area of the Long Valley, the Fox Hills and the Curragh of Kildare. What were the difficulties to be overcome the military reader presumably already knows, but the lay reader, whether statesman or politician—terms too often confounded in these latter days—can only learn the whole truth from the words of Sir Evelyn himself in the document which he addressed to Sir Redvers Buller at the conclusion of the West Meon manœuvres. As this paper deserves to be ranked a historical document I have no hesitation in placing it on record in an Appendix.

CHAPTER IX.

SIR EVELYN AS A SPORTSMAN.

A Mighty Hunter—A tender-hearted Soldier—The Hampshire Packs—Sport encouraged—A Bayard of to-day.

MR. ALEXANDER POPE once remarked, in a little known poem, that

> "Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began—
> A mighty hunter, and his prey was man."

Sir Evelyn Wood is a mighty hunter in the conventional sense, as well as that in which the poet seems to be supported by the best authorities among divines. From his earliest days he has been in the saddle, and he keeps up the sport almost, I was going to say, as a religious duty. He is ever among the first flight where

> ". . . . The bold youth strain up the threat'ning steep,
> Rush through the thicket, down the valleys sweep,
> Hang o'er their coursers' heads with eager speed,
> And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed."

I think I hear some town-bred paleface mutter—"Of course as a soldier he is naturally fond of all kinds of

cruelty." That was the sort of thing the late John Bright, for example, would have thought, or, maybe, said, just as he libelled the British soldier on the word of some anonymous liar about Abu Klea. But, as a matter of fact, Sir Evelyn is the most tender-hearted man alive. Nearly twenty years ago he told, with broken voice and streaming eyes, to an audience of Volunteer officers the following story of

"A battalion of our army encamped on the banks of a river. In front was a deep, impassable ravine, on the far side of which, distant about a quarter of a mile in a straight line, grazed a herd of cattle. The men had existed some days on biscuit and tea, and were naturally desirous of animal food. Three officers and some natives in our service rode round the head of the ravine, turned a number of the cattle, and began to drive them towards the encampment. Suddenly, a vast number of hostile natives sprang out of their ambush between the party and their camp. The subsidised natives disappeared, and the three Englishmen turned and rode for their lives. Two got out of shot, but the horse of the third fell, with a broken leg, and the rider was nearly overtaken by the natives, when his two companions missed him. Turning their horses they rode back, and my informant saw one of them drive off his horse, for it clung to him after he had dismounted. The three stood back to back, and when the battalion got to the spot, their comrades lay together, horribly mutilated, but with eleven dead foes around them.

"It is a story to make us feel proud of belonging to the same country as those two men, yet, when I was narrating the circumstances, in a country house, a young gentleman, who is engaged in mercantile pursuits, said to his father: 'Don't you think they were great fools to go back?' The father replied: 'I should hope any gentleman would have done the same.'"

More recently by a good deal I have seen Sir Evelyn fairly break down as he recited the same story, which, I think, few can read without emotion. But he hunts now-a-days as he hunted in his hot youth for the exercise without which, to him, life would scarcely be worth living; for the sake of the pleasure of bringing into play the qualities of nerve and coolness with which he is exceptionally endowed in the face of danger, and for the example it sets to the younger officers under his command. I have heard of one day in the late season, when he hunted from dawn till dark, and then, making up by self-sacrifice for the little bit of self-indulgence, sat from dark till pretty nearly midnight settling, with some of his generals, some details of the new Drill-book. Mr. Garth's and the "H. H.," and some other Fox-Hounds, with the Ropley and Knaphill Harriers are all within easy rides. The meets of all the packs are published in Divisional Orders. These packs are all better attended than used to be the case by officers from the Division, and the military work, so far from falling off in quantity or quality, has shown a remark-

able improvement in both respects, many officers think on account of the energy begotten by the hunting. It is one thing to subscribe to a pack of hounds, and quite another to find sport for it. This has been successfully achieved at Aldershot. Not without difficulty have foxes been preserved in a locality which, though bleak and barren enough, is in nearly every part continually beaten by the foot of man or horse. But after several failures perseverance has had its wonted reward, and now a couple of days' sport a week can be counted upon. For those who cannot afford a mount, there are Foot Beagles, and an association exists for stocking and preserving game on the Government ground at Woolmer Forest. This and every other athletic, or social, or educational, or charitable enterprise has found at Aldershot warm supporters in Sir Evelyn Wood and his family.

It is many years since a well-known sporting writer—it was in the middle of the Zulu war—bore testimony to the qualities in the hunting field of Evelyn Wood. From that source I learn a little item of Crimean days hitherto unknown to me. It is that when the bad winter of 1854 was at its worst, and "horses dropped like flies in the cold," young Wood kept a Russian pony for the drag-hunts that were established, and this pony survived when others succumbed, because his owner "gave up to it his only blanket, and sedulously exercised it whenever a heavy snow-storm had fallen."

It was added—in 1879—that "Master Ruskie still survives, and enjoys a hearty old age.'

"We next hear of Cornet Wood as hunting in Dorsetshire with that fine old sportsman, Mr. Farquharson, and Major, now Colonel, Arthur Tremayne used to declare that he had often heard of men going straight, but he had never seen it done literally by any one excepting the 'Admiral,' as Wood was dubbed in the regiment. Some of the gallant 13th Light Dragoons may yet remember a remarkably high single rail over which it is recorded that the Admiral stopped the field. During his long spell of active service in India, Wood became an expert in pig-sticking, and got first spear with a hyena—an exploit of which we dare say he was prouder than he was of charging a squadron nearly single-handed, or of attacking seventy rebels with an escort of two native soldiers. . . . . At a later period Captain Wood became well-known in the south of Ireland, hunting from Cahir, and afterwards was equally well-known with the Ward Union. He was a great friend of the master, that prince of good fellows, Mr. Morrogh, and a warm admirer of Charles Brindley (the whip), as who was not? We fancy that Wood's habit of riding very slowly at his fences was based on Brindley's example and precept. At a dinner of the W. U. Hunt the 'Soldier from Dublin' was enthusiastically toasted. 'You are all too kind,' he said, adroitly; 'the fact is, whenever I go out with the Ward, I always make a point of asking the name of any man who shows me the back seams of his coat, and that's why I have so

many acquaintances among you.' It was in Ireland Wood became the owner of the notorious big chestnut Vagabond, who had 'a back like a town' and kicking power in proportion; he had been sold and returned on his owner's hands again and again, and most people were glad to get rid of him at any sacrifice; he was one of the finest timber jumpers possible, and it is said that, during the twelve seasons Wood hunted him, he got him to do everything in the world except fall; but to the day of his death no man ever got him alone to the meet, excepting his master. Probably the best successor to Vagabond General Wood has ever possessed is the big brown Wargame (a son of Theobald), purchased at the Belhus sale of 1877; this horse is known to have greatly distinguished himself in Mr. Garth's country, and on one occasion was seen to clear finely a seemingly impossible fence, which, in fact, consisted of a bush-fence, a park paling, and a haha. Wargame accompanied his master to Africa, and once, when the latter had lost the track in a region utterly unfamiliar to horse and rider, the horse probably saved the rider's life, for he persisted in turning away from the course they had hitherto taken, and on its being left to him to decide, he went straight for the English encampment, and thus escaped an ambush of the enemy. It is said that the principal chief in Pondoland admired Colonel Wood's big brown horse immensely, and begged to have a deal, but was somewhat taken aback to find the value of an English hunter of that character was estimated at forty oxen, *i.e.* £400; the chief vainly offered many wives instead and retired horseless. Those

good men and true who have met General Wood in the hunting field, whether in Ireland or at Aldershot, with the Hon. H. Petre's staghounds, or with the Essex Union or East Essex foxhounds, will corroborate our estimate of his performances when we say that his riding is as bold as his judgment is good; he has an extraordinarily quick eye for a country and its weak places, and always gets to the end of the longest runs with the least possible amount taken out of his horse, always in the right place, *i.e.* right in front, but without an atom of jealousy; he is a model for our hunting youth, and none the less so, that he is extremely patient with, and considerate of, his mounts."

Nearly every word in this passage may, reading soldiers for mounts, be applied to Sir Evelyn Wood as a commanding officer. He has turned many a vagabond into a good man and an efficient and trusty servant of Queen and country. He manages his war game as easily as his steed, and his judgment is as sound in the field against the enemies of his country as it is after Brer Reynard. In one of his vamped up mottoes Sir Walter Scott attributed to an Old Play this passage:

> "All live by seeming.
> The beggar begs with it, and the gay courtier
> Gains land and title, rank and rule, by seeming;
> The clergy scorn it not, and the bold soldier
> Will eke with it his service."

A greater man than Scott has put in the mouth of the veriest villain that even his mind conceived the

phrase: "Men should be what they seem." Perhaps to no one is it given to show to man the heart and spirit as Heaven sees it. But if there is in this broad realm of ours a man who, judged by every test that can be applied by contemporaries, is what he seems, a Bayard among living men, "without fear and without reproach," that man is Henry Evelyn Wood. In a life, of the events of which this is a very imperfect transcription, he has never attempted aught that he has not accomplished where success was possible to man, and he has gained credit and renown out of every employment that has been entrusted to him. It may be there are other, and lofty, duties that fate has in store for him in the service of his Sovereign. And, whatever duties he may undertake, all who know him will be confident he will perform them with a single eye to the honour of the Army, the glory of his country, and the progress of humanity. There is but one fear for his future: it is that denounced in the Gospel to him of whom all men speak well.

APPENDIX.

ALDERSHOT,

November 20th, 1891.

ADJUTANT-GENERAL,

In order to facilitate arrangements for a repetition of Autumn Manœuvres, I commence my report on those held this year by detailing briefly the numerous preliminary steps which were necessarily undertaken to obtain the use of the land.

I. PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS.

1. SELECTION OF GROUND.

During the Autumn of 1890 I examined ground between Basingstoke and Alresford, but abandoned the idea of its use owing to a scarcity of water, and the number of woods on the high ground lying between those two points.

At the close of the year I communicated with Sir Nelson Rycroft, Bart., of Kempshot Park, Basingstoke, whose son, Captain W. H. Rycroft, 7th Dragoon Guards, surveyed the country lying between Wolverton on the North, and Oakley and Whitchurch on the South.

After a careful inspection of the ground, I asked permission of the landlords to communicate with their tenants (Appendix A).

My request for use of the land was received in a most generous spirit by landowners and farming tenants on the

North side of the district. The Earl of Carnarvon gave permission for the encampment in his park of 6000 men, who would have been necessarily placed close to the woods in which pheasants are reared, whilst on the South side Mr. Portal placed at my disposal land on which his dairy cattle are fed. However, after several visits to the ground and personal interviews with the shooting tenants, I found it impossible to overcome their objections, and was reluctantly obliged to abandon the scheme.

In the meantime a Staff Officer had examined the country in the vicinity of Petersfield, which had the serious disadvantage of scarcity of water and an absence of suitable encamping grounds. These difficulties induced me to look over some ground in North Hampshire, and after similar preliminary steps had been undertaken, selection was made of a suitable tract lying between Stockbridge and Winchester. Here, however, again the interests of shooting tenants prevented our arrangements being completed. It must, I think, now be taken for granted that Manœuvres without an Act of Parliament are not possible where the sporting rights are leased to persons residing out of the district. Eventually the ground about Petersfield was selected, subject to my obtaining leave from all the landowners and occupiers.

On the 1st December, 1890, I asked permission for the assembly of two Divisions of Infantry with a proportion of other arms, which was approved on the 28th January, 1891.

2. Arrangements with Occupiers.

Letters similar to that shown in Appendix A were sent to the seven largest landowners, and subsequently a Staff Officer visited all the occupiers concerned.

Some difficulty was experienced throughout the Manœuvres owing to our finding it impossible to obtain a representative committee of occupiers, although we received great assistance from Mr. Bonham Carter, Major Woods, Captain Le Roy Lewis, and others. All our propositions, however, were accepted in a cordial spirit by owners and occupiers.

On the 6th May I rode over the ground and selected the approximate positions of the camps, and on the 9th June I reported to you on the area for the proposed Manœuvres.

Several communications were received towards the end of August, pointing out that owing to the unusually inclement weather harvest operations had been materially delayed, and suggesting that the Manœuvres should be put off to a later date. Some persons went so far as to propose the end of September.

On the 3rd of September I again visited the ground, and decided that the Manœuvres should be put off until the 10th September, or about 10 days later than would have been necessary in an ordinary season.

3. Maps.

700 Manœuvre Maps were specially prepared by the Ordnance Survey Department (see Appendix B). These were issued to the troops, and a 6-in. Ordnance map was given to the Generals of Divisions. The 2-in. map had 100ft. contours marked on it, and was apparently enlarged from the 1-in. I imagine the process would be more troublesome, but the result might be more satisfactory, if the 2-in. maps were reduced from the 6-in.; nevertheless the map answered well and gave general satisfaction. Although there were not many names in this sparsely occupied country, yet spots could

generally be identified by the numbers indicating the contours. There were one or two minor errors, for example "Hockham," near East Meon, is not known locally by that name. It would have been better if the difference between the 1st class and 2nd class roads could have been more clearly shown.

All the maps were mounted on linen except $\frac{1}{4}$th, which were prepared on paper, and five on specially prepared tough paper. There is a general agreement of opinion that in spite of the linen map becoming indistinct from wet and folding (which may also affect the accuracy of the scale), yet they are the most suitable for regimental officers, while for General and Staff Officers the best map is the paper one cut into squares and mounted on linen.

4. Assembly and Inception of the Divisions.

On the 1st September two Infantry Divisions having been formed (with the exception of one Battalion of the Grenadier Guards coming from Ireland and one Field Battery at Hilsea), they were inspected on the 2nd by His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, dressed and equipped as they were intended to march.

Five-and-a-half Battalions had joined the command towards the end of August, and the opportunity was taken of causing them to work out tactical schemes during the time they were compulsorily delayed at Aldershot, so as to place them on more even terms with the troops stationed here.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE MANŒUVRE GROUND AND CAMPS.

1. Ground.

My unsuccessful efforts to obtain the use of ground in the North of Hampshire were prolonged, because it was evident from the first that difficulties would be experienced as regards camps in the Meon district, and although the weather was unusually severe, yet even with ordinary weather, difficulties must always be anticipated on similar geographical formations.

The ground over which we were permitted to work is bounded on the north by the road from East Meon to West Meon, on the west by the river Meon, on the south by the road from Brockbridge, north of Windmill Down, to Clanfield, and on the east by the South-Western Railway. Its area is seven miles from east to west by five miles from north to south. (See Map, Appendix B.)

One dominant ridge, generally 400 feet above the river Meon, runs in a north-westerly and south-easterly direction through three parts of the area to Tegdown, where the ridge turns sharply to the north-east, its culminating point being nearly 600 feet higher than East Meon.

When the ground was first examined it was feared that this ridge might prove unfavourable to all tactical schemes, since scouts could look down from it into either camp; but the plan of placing the summit of the ridge out of bounds, except during the actual operations, obviated difficulty on this point.

The Camp on the eastern side of the ground should, if possible, for tactical reasons, have been placed near Buriton,

but as the Meon river, which rises one mile south of the village of East Meon, is the only water supply available for the district, it was necessary to place the camp for one Division there, while the other Division was placed at Soberton, about 6½ miles distant by the track over the Downs, and 10 miles down stream following the course of the river.

The choice of camping ground at East Meon was further restricted to the left bank of the river, where there were a few meadows, the fields on the right bank being under cultivation, with crops in many cases still standing when the Manœuvres were terminated.

One narrow lane ran through the proposed site for the camp and was generally below the fields on either side, which were for the most part small and not well adapted for camps. In the more elevated fields the slopes were too steep for men or horses to rest, and in the lower fields the surface was too flat to allow of the water running off; indeed, it was within two feet of the surface.

The Camp at Soberton left little or nothing to be desired so far as the Head-Quarters of the Division and one Brigade were concerned, but it was necessary to place the 2nd Brigade either on arable land and stubble fields, or to remove it 2000 yards from the water. This last alternative was adopted.

The Mounted Infantry was encamped in an arable field, which, like those at East Meon, became a sea of mud after three days' heavy rain.

The Head-Quarters Camp of the Umpire-in-Chief was placed at West Meon, nearly equidistant between the two Divisions. The principal Staff Officers lived in a private house, which was hired at their own expense, for the fortnight. There can be no question that such an arrangement, which prevails on the Continent, and which, although not at present sanctioned

by regulation, is what would be done on service, is most conducive to the public interest.

2. Water Supply.

The water supply within the area of the Manœuvres was dependent on the river Meon, the supply from which was sufficient and of good quality.

East Meon.—It was necessary to arrange for drinking water to be pumped into the water carts on the road at some little distance from the stream; a plentiful supply for horses was obtained by pumping into troughs from a leat close to the road. Water for washing was arranged for by troughs in one of the fields between the camp and the river.

West Meon.—The water supply was a comparatively simple matter, and met all requirements, except for bathing, for which there were no facilities at either camp.

Soberton.—Here the water supply was well arranged so far as the power of obtaining such existed, but both the drinking water and the water for washing had to be delivered to the camps by carts and stored in tanks; the horses were watered near the stream.

At Soberton hill camp, on account of the distance to the water, a rectangular tank capable of holding 5000 gallons was dug out and lined with tarpaulin. This answered well, but in future should it become necessary to thus store water, a pump should be fitted to the tank through which all water should be drawn. By such an arrangement there would be less waste, greater convenience to the troops, and the water would be kept cleaner and the ground round the tank drier.

The supply in the tank at Soberton hill was not used for cooking or drinking purposes, water for which was stored

separately in tanks brought from the buildings now being constructed in the Stanhope lines, Aldershot.

I am not satisfied that the arrangements I made for the supply of water would have been sufficient if the hot weather of the first three days had continued. During Manœuvres in England there should be facilities for the men to wash not only their feet but their bodies.

I am of opinion, from the experience gained at these Manœuvres, that the water supply to camps, whether standing or otherwise, is so important a feature in the duties of the Royal Engineers as to deserve special attention.

3. Sanitation.

The experience gained last year was not fully utilised in all respects. More screens were issued for latrines and urinals, but for want of proper instruction beforehand the trenches in the screens were not properly placed and in consequence men urinated against the walls of the screens. In future, poles should be provided for all latrines.

In one Division, although the camp was surrounded by hedges, no adequate arrangements were made to save the ground from being polluted, and when the Divisions changed camps on the 16th of September, the ground was left by this Division in a very dirty state.

Special precautions should be taken to ensure that the camps occupied by Volunteers are kept clean, as from want of practice this is not generally done.

The issue of brooms is essential to the due conservancy of a camp. On service they would be provided by the troops from hedges, brushwood, &c., but as this is not feasible in England they should be issued on requisition.

4. Supply Depot.

Whenever it can be arranged these should be situated close to a main road, with an entrance and exit staked and corded, the Depot of the Army Service Corps being in the same field.

A Divisional Depot for 6000 men requires at least six acres, and the more nearly square the field is the more convenient it will be.

As the Army Service Corps is the first to move out and the last to come in, in this case being under canvas for three months against a fortnight for the troops, great consideration should be given in selecting the best camping ground for it.

III. THE MARCH (TO AND FRO BETWEEN ALDERSHOT AND THE MANŒUVRE GROUND)

1. Infantry.

The Divisions marched from Aldershot on the 7th and 8th September, respectively, and reached Soberton and East Meon in good order, with the exception of a portion of one Division, in which, owing mainly to want of experience of field service, the men suffered one very hot day from being marched in too close order, and also from badly fitted boots. The orders laid down clearly that the boots were to be previously carefully inspected and that 100 yards distance was to be preserved between battalions, and 10 yards between companies whenever the force was not in the immediate vicinity of the enemy. These orders were not properly carried out in this Division.

The number of men falling out varied in proportion to the

care taken by the officers to ensure proper attention being paid to the fitting of boots and socks and the cleanliness of the feet. During the march to the Manœuvre ground the numbers of men who fell out ranged from 11¾ per cent. in one battalion to one man in 750 in another battalion, the total per-centage averaging 2¼. Another way of putting this is—that 73 fell out in one battalion to one in another. I apprehend insufficient attention was given to Part V. (II.) Route Marching, Infantry Drill, 1889, and stricter discipline is necessary in this respect.

In some cases great pains had been taken before the Manœuvres to harden the men's feet, and in marching to Meon one or two men fell out in one battalion which had previously practised marching in Marching Order (the men carrying 38lbs. besides clothes).

I do not wish, however, to imply that the men did not suffer, for the Commanding Officer of this battalion informed me that, on making an inspection, he found the soles of the feet of several men who had not fallen out were quite raw. Pride in the Regiment and the Captain's influence kept these men in the ranks.

I refer to this subject under the heading of "Boots," but on the earlier days of operations such casualties must be expected amongst men who are not at regular duty and whose feet therefore become soft; and it must, moreover, be borne in mind, that as the men were not medically inspected before leaving Aldershot, there were many in the ranks who were from various causes unfit to march.

In some corps there is a tendency, especially in rifle battalions and light infantry, to exceed the prescribed rate of marching. This practice should be rigidly repressed and the rate should be frequently verified by an officer with a watch at

the rear of the column. The length of pace should also be tested. The practice was tried by marching bands in the centre of battalions, and it answered so well that I recommend it should be enforced, the band being placed in the centre and the drums in front of the battalion, reversing their positions on alternate days. During the march back, one Division covered the distance of 19 miles with practically no one falling out of the ranks, the men marching not only cheerily but very well. It must, however, be remembered that on the advice of the General Officers and Principal Medical Officers the men did not wear valises.

Military Chiropodists—Some Commanding Officers are in favour of a certain number of men in every battalion or corps being instructed as chiropodists, as the neglect of corns swells the list of men who fall out on the march. I recommend the experiment be tried.

2. Horse Artillery.

A Horse Artillery Brigade Division of two Batteries, and the Mounted Infantry (strength 330 officers and men), were ordered to leave Aldershot on the 14th September, at such an hour as would bring them to West Meon at 6 A.M. on that day, in time to take part in an operation which was to commence at 8 A.M.

The march of the Artillery from Aldershot to West Meon (23¼ miles), and thence after the tactical operations to Soberton, was no test, as one battery with the service equipment of 12-pounder B.L. guns carried no ammunition, and the other battery was supplied with a lighter experimental equipment and lighter 12-pounder B.L. guns. The hope that the trial would bring to light the capabilities of each battery was, there-

fore, not fulfilled. The work during the operations on this day was also very easy on the horses.

3. Mounted Infantry.

The same march, made by the Mounted Infantry, reflected great credit on the officer in command. There were 8 casualties, and although the efficiency of the horses would be even greater with more knowledge on the part of some of the officers, yet considering their short mounted service, and the fact that the majority of the men had only been mounted for a very short time, the result is very creditable to the officer in command and all those serving under him.

4. Transport.

The system of moving the transport of each Brigade immediately behind its troops should be abandoned, as horses walk faster than men and are kept continually starting and stopping, causing the shoulders and necks to be rubbed and leaving no time for feeding.

In future, I propose to march all the transport in one column in rear of the Infantry. This, with proper arrangements at the start, should not cause any appreciable delay in the arrival of the baggage.

5. Regimental Transport.

Two battalions, the 1st Durham Light Infantry and the Grenadier Guards, both outside the normal strength at Aldershot, had no regimental transport on charge.

In future manœuvres it will be better that the usual propor-

tion of regimental transport should be attached to similarly situated battalions from the Army Service Corps, with drivers complete. This will save trouble, correspondence, and many requisitions.

IV. REMARKS ON THE CONDUCT OF THE OPERATIONS.

1. Programme.

During the Manœuvres of the Infantry Columns at Woolmer in 1890, and in previous years, all the schemes were made out by the Umpire-in-Chief. It was thought this year that owing to the higher rank of the officers and the practice enjoyed by many of them in setting schemes and in acting as Chief Umpires, it might be well to decentralize and leave a part of the instruction in their hands.

The programme, therefore, issued on the 5th September (Appendix C) placed on the General Officers commanding the two Divisions the duty of instructing those under them for six out of the twelve days available for the Manœuvres.

The general result of this attempt at decentralising the instruction was very satisfactory, although the teaching varied according to the experience of the officers in command; owing probably to the want of practice in setting schemes they did not always induce a collision, and in some cases the men were under arms for longer periods than upon the days when the Divisions were opposed. This should be prevented in future.

The schemes given by me were issued overnight to the commanders of the two opposing sides, who were instructed that they were not to be shown to anyone but their senior

Staff Officer until half-an-hour before starting from camp for the points of assembly on the day of the operations (see order Appendix D).

The question of giving troops an occasional rest day other than Sunday was debated, and it was decided it would be undesirable to leave any day wholly unoccupied. I recommend that this decision be adhered to for the future.

2. Value of Operations in a Strange Country.

Advantage was taken of the experience gained at the Cavalry Manœuvres in 1891, and Officers were prohibited from riding over the Manœuvre ground when not engaged in the operations. This, together with the imposing of a neutral zone, half-a-mile broad, over which parties from either camp might not pass, added greatly to the interest and value of the instruction.

Although the additional labour of the Ordnance Store Department is very great, yet the system of the Divisions exchanging camps at the end of the first week is well worth the extra trouble imposed.

3. Distinguishing Dress.

On the 2nd day of the Manœuvres, owing to the heat of the sun, both opposing forces wore helmets, from which some confusion resulted. I endeavoured to rectify this by purchasing locally some calico, strips of which were worn on the left shoulder. The effect was not quite satisfactory, and I recommend a proposal made by Lieutenant-General His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, that we should assimilate our practice to that adopted in the German Army, by putting

white cap covers on the head-dress of one side. There will remain the difficulty with those corps which have white helmets, but this affects a small number only of those generally employed.

The expense would not be great, as the covers will be required for Infantry only, the weather in England being seldom sufficiently hot to inconvenience seriously mounted men. I propose to purchase calico and to have it made up into helmet covers by next drill season at a cost of £60. I estimate this will suffice for 7000 men.

In my report of the Cavalry Manœuvres, dated the 25th October, 1890, I recommended that the cocked hat should be abolished for Manœuvres, and I ask permission to carry this out for the future. Every Staff Officer when coming under fire this year removed his cocked hat and walked about bareheaded, because opposing troops were invariably directed to fire upon any officer with this too conspicuous head-dress.

4. Infantry.

The most noticeable point in the Infantry during the Manœuvres was the great improvement in fire discipline, and in the skill of the company officers in handling their commands. There was a much more correct appreciation of ground and its bearing on the operations taking place than last year, and briefly it may be asserted with confidence that the advantage of careful "Company Field Training" was very apparent.

Officers' Chargers. — It is worthy of consideration whether the limit of height of Infantry officers' chargers should not be from 14-2 to 15-2. Horses of this size can be obtained at a lower price. They thrive better on a small

allowance of forage, and are much more suitable from the facility of mounting and dismounting than animals 16 hands high, which are now often used.

5. Artillery.

I laid down that this arm was not to be employed as a rule over 2500 yards. This generally answered well.

The orders given as to the verification of ranges were not transmitted to the batteries of one Division and were not acted on in either Division, and the consequence was a failure to obtain much useful instruction.

In several instances batteries were pushed forward up lanes before it was ascertained that the exits from such were free from the enemy. The Artillery officers were not generally sufficiently supervised by those under whom they were serving. In many instances they received orders such as "Take up the best position you can," or, "Conform." On one occasion the Artillery of one Division took up its first position within 500 yards of unshaken Infantry. The batteries of the Divisions occasionally came into position at such long distances the one from the other, and with such independent action, that on service they might have been destroyed in detail.

Artillery fire must be concentrated and directed by one will. Infantry should not be expected to successfully attack Infantry which has not been temporarily shaken by Artillery, and whose Artillery has not been at least temporarily put out of action.

On the 12th September, the officer commanding one of the opposing forces placed one battery of his Artillery on low ground, 210 feet under a steep hill, and when the force was

driven back no instruction was apparently sent to assist the battery commander in regaining the line of retreat. In consequence, he attempted to ascend the hill with a gradient so steep, that although three of the guns reached the summit yet the fourth stuck fast, and all of them were so delayed that the enemy's Infantry arrived within 500 yards before half the hill was surmounted. Thus the battery must have been captured. The ammunition wagons, which could not breast the hill, were left below until the conclusion of the operations. The only satisfactory point in this movement was the skill of the officers in leading on the easiest gradient and the good driving of the men. The three teams ascended 212 feet in 410 yards, the total distance traversed being 632 yards. I watched the horses as they were going home, and am of opinion this quarter-of-an-hour's work took more out of them than a long day's march.

The Cordite blank cartridge being made up of 150 pieces of brown paper makes the ground very untidy. It will probably be necessary when manœuvring on private property to make some arrangement for clearing it up. There is little smoke from this cartridge and it is soon dissipated. The smoke from the service charge of the same substance will, however, be greater in volume.

6. Cavalry (Divisional Squadrons).

The scouting did not quite satisfy me, bearing in mind that the squadrons employed had been at Aldershot for two drill seasons, and had during that time taken part in two Cavalry Drills and Manœuvres.

As a rule messages were sent back only when the enemy was visible. The squadron leaders seem scarcely to have

appreciated the importance to a General of negative information, that is, that the enemy had not been sighted.

There was a tendency to dismount to employ fire action when Infantry was available in the immediate vicinity of the squadron. This arose from the want of practice in officers of all arms of working in conjunction with arms other than that to which they belong.

In one Division the mistake was made of ordering a squadron leader not to fight on any account, and acting on these orders he allowed a company belonging to his force to be surrounded without an effort to extricate it. These orders I was obliged to cancel.

7. Royal Engineers.

The good work carried out by the Field Companies and Telegraph Battalion, Royal Engineers, is detailed under another part of this report. Sections of the Companies were employed on several occasions to mark entrenchments, but the most important tactical work of the Royal Engineers, that of preparing an entrenched position which had been proposed for the 19th September, was necessarily abandoned owing to the rain.

8. Balloon Section.

The country was not favourable for the use of balloons, and yet their utility is undoubted when one force stands on the defensive, and the experience gained fully repaid the cost of taking a balloon down with the troops, although the Manœuvres were terminated prematurely.

The force of wind prevented its ascent on two occasions,

and on another day the operations were cut short by a dense fog. The average strength of the wind at the ground level on the summit of the hills was about 12 miles an hour. It is assumed that when it is more than 20 miles an hour, *i.e.*, the equivalent of a "gentle breeze," the motion of the car will be too great to permit of useful observations.

It was found by experience and confirmed by experiment that as the force of the wind over the crest of the ridge was always considerably greater than elsewhere, it answered better to make the ascent from the valleys even with the disadvantage of paying out more rope.

If balloons are to be at the disposal of Commanders for Manœuvres there should be one with each of two opposing forces, as the advantage they give is great.

9. Yeomanry and Volunteers.

The Officer Commanding Hampshire Yeomanry asked permission on 28th July for his Regiment to take part in the Manœuvres for a week, and such arrangement was sanctioned by Horse Guards War Office letter of 8th August. The Commanding Officer accounts for the small muster (40) owing to the retarded harvest operations. The Officers of the Regiment, two of whom were attached to my Staff, are in many cases landowners and the men are occupiers of land. They helped materially, not only in rendering the Manœuvres possible by facilitating the arrangements for the use of the land, but also in minimizing claims for damages.

Five shillings per diem for every mounted man was paid to the Officer Commanding; Camp equipment was also supplied.

The 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment

also received authority to take part in the Manœuvres for a week and brought 698 officers and men at one time, but this number varied from day to day.

10. All Arms.

Prior to the Manœuvres officers were directed to study carefully the "Rules for the Conduct of Field Manœuvres," and a recapitulation was placed before them on the 5th September (see Appendix C), of the mistakes which had been noticed most frequently at Aldershot during the last two years. The result showed that much trouble had been taken to master the subject and to avoid similar errors. The failing most apparent is that of officers considering only the branch of the service to which they belong. Many officers have not sufficient confidence to give decided orders to the other arms of the service; thus officers of the same force were observed working in the immediate vicinity but independently of each other. Commanders of units neither asked for nor gave information to other units operating near them. Infantry when joining Artillery in action seldom or never enquired as to the range.

When attacking strong positions it was observed that sufficient reconnaissances were not made, that time was not given for the action of Artillery fire, and that the Staff did not direct the general movement.

The study of the Umpire Rules caused, however, all combatants to appreciate and accept unhesitatingly the decision of Umpires, and to conform to them with less demur than I have hitherto seen.

11. Umpire Staff.

It has been suggested to me, and I think with reason, that it would be well if the Umpire-in-Chief saw the Umpires for a

few minutes before the conference, since officers do not like criticizing the actions of their superiors before an assembly of other officers. This preliminary conference would enable the Umpire-in-Chief to elicit points which afford useful instruction and are now sometimes not brought out, from the hesitation of Umpires to remark on the conduct of their superiors. The reports by the Senior Umpires on a day's operation should be received by the Umpire-in-Chief within three hours of the termination of the operation. It is of the greatest importance to get the criticism published without any delay.

In selecting Umpires it is desirable as far as possible to choose officers who have been recently serving with troops. When officers of the Head-Quarter Staff are employed, if they have been some time away from their corps they should attend at least half-a-dozen of the tactical days at Aldershot prior to being detailed for this duty.

12. Casualties during Tactical Operations.

In order to deal with the difficulty of stragglers, who in recent wars have become very numerous during the progress of an Infantry fight, orders were given on the 5th September to practise measures to meet such cases (see Appendix E).

In many instances, however, the Umpires forgot to give the units placed out of action the piece of paper (see form attached, Appendix F) specifying the time, and considerable difficulty arose in the case of units placed out of action during a retirement, as they could not readily regain the rear of the force to which they belonged without causing confusion.

I concur with the views of some Umpires that troops as a rule should not lose instruction by being placed out of action for more than half-an-hour, and although it is necessary for all

troops to remain for five minutes on the spot in order that their adversaries may take notice of the result, I think it would be better, in the absence of specific instruction from the Umpire, which should be given when necessary, that at the conclusion of five minutes after the Infantry have piled arms, the Cavalry have dismounted, or Artillery have limbered up, to the front, that they should all go to the rear of their respective forces, Infantry marching with reversed arms, and the mounted branches at a walk.

13. Some of the Errors Observed during the Operations.

Some of the schemes assigned far too extended a position for the force available for its occupation, and similarly in attacking the position, the attacking force was often unduly extended.

Occasionally sufficient thought was not given to the orders contained in the Special Ideas. For example, an officer on the 15th September being ordered to march and attack the enemy vigorously, in spite of the fact that he was aware the enemy was only a rear-guard, elected to make a turning movement instead, and thus gave the rear-guard time to escape.

There was occasionally a tendency on the part of officers who have not been employed with large forces to act in a manner which would not have been attempted in war.

Signallers.—One of the faults was that signals on both sides were read by the opponents, and this fault occurs during nearly every tactical day at Aldershot. It might be well that some instruction on this point should be given to the classes while they are being taught at the School of Signalling. This remark has been passed to the officer concerned.

14. Ammunition.

Owing to the early termination of the Manœuvres the expenditure of ammunition was much less than I anticipated.

R.A. 12lb. B.L.	28 rounds per gun.
Magazine Rifle	12·5 per man.
Martini-Henry Rifle	15 „
Cavalry & Royal Engineers ...	13 „
Machine gun	100 per gun.

Great pains were taken to economise the ammunition, and in the orders issued on the 1st September, 1891, a maximum of ten rounds per man for a Divisional and five rounds for a Brigade field day was allowed. I think I was unduly apprehensive of the expenditure, and it would have been better to have fixed the maximum at fifteen rounds per man, as the husbanding of ammunition, although useful as a means of instruction, has the disadvantage also of occasionally rendering it false.

The time has arrived when smokeless powder should be issued both to Infantry and Artillery, so that some judgment may be formed of any changes which may be required in tactics. As the Continental nations have now had it under trial for two years, and this year were using nothing else, I think an effort should be made to issue sufficient by the 1st February, 1892, for the field training of the companies, and that sufficient should be issued by 1st May for the use of all arms at all field days in 1892.

The small allowance of ammunition we are able, for economical reasons, to expend at Manœuvres gives but little instruction in practising the supply to the firing line. I have been urged to place some limit within which neither small

arm ammunition carts nor mules may be taken forward. I am loath to suggest any such limitation, fearing it may grow into a practice on service, and thus give an excuse for not getting up ammunition as close as may be sometimes possible. I think the difficulty may be best met by instructing the Umpires to rule, when necessary, the ammunition supply out of action. This I propose to add to the Umpire Rules, para. 18.

As one or more rounds of ball ammunition were picked up on the field of exercise it is certain that the certificate hitherto rendered (Appendix G), although stringent, is not sufficiently effective, and I propose to add the words, "That an officer felt at the bottom of every pouch."

15. March Past.

The Right Honourable the Earl of Northbrook, G.C.S.I., Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, to whom I wrote, consented and attended to salute at the March Past, which, in order to ensure the presence of the Hants Yeomanry and Volunteer Battalion, had been arranged to take place on the 19th September. Unfortunately the weather was too unfavourable for the parade.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES.

1. Supply.

Aldershot being treated as the base, Divisional Depots were established at East Meon and Soberton, with an intermediate rest camp at Bordon.

Flour.—This was bought at Bishop's Waltham, in the

district, and the purchase being completed three days before the export of rye from Russia was prohibited, the "best Household" was obtained at £1 8*s.* 6*d.*, or 11*d.* per sack less than we pay at Aldershot for "London No. 2," the market value of which is 3*s.* per sack less than "best Household." The bread was good. For the first three days the ovens had scarcely sufficient bottom heat. In future, where the bakery is on wet clay, the ovens should be burnt for a week before baking is commenced.

MEAT.—Beef was supplied by the Aldershot contractor who, after some negotiation, supplied the camps at the Aldershot prices; this lost us the opportunity of training the Army Service Corps Officers to purchase. The quality of the meat left nothing to be desired, all the beef being English, except one lot of Canadian. I have been urged to purchase in the district; the cost would be rather more, which need not, however, be considered, if the gain were adequate; but as Manœuvres can only take place in sparsely populated districts, I apprehend that the advantage would fall to some middleman, as sufficient cattle could not be obtained locally. It would probably have been better if a central butchery had been established in the vicinity of Warnford, about half way between the camps.

OATS.—Oats were purchased in the London markets at the market rates, the bulk being black Swedes at 40 lbs. to the bushel, the balance being thin-skinned white Russians at 41 lbs.

It has been recommended that the oats should be purchased in the district, but the remark made in paragraph on Meat applies in this case. There will be no substantial advantage to the farmers unless the oats grown in the district are purchased, and this is not possible in the sparsely cultivated districts where only Manœuvres can be held by permission of

farmers. At the Manœuvres in 1890 some farmers endeavoured to sell us oats bought in the London market, and for us to have made such purchases would not have been an advantage to the district.

HAY.—Hay was purchased at the average of £3 9*s.* 7*d.* per ton. I consider the quality was generally good, although, from want of storage and owing to the necessity of collecting it a considerable period in advance, many trusses were mouldy. This applied in a lesser degree to some of the oats.

One Lieutenant-Colonel of Artillery and one squadron leader condemn the hay unreservedly, and state that it was not only in many cases mouldy, but that generally it was poor in quality. As, however, the damaged hay, together with all the trusses rejected as mouldy was bought by farmers near Soberton for £2 per ton, and near East Meon for more than its original cost, I think that the farmers' estimate of the hay was probably more accurate than that of the two officers who have not been through a course of instruction in judging the quality of supplies. All undamaged surplus hay was carted into Aldershot.

FIREWOOD.—This was purchased in the district, the average price being 8*s.* 8*d.* per ton.

2. RATIONS AND THEIR PREPARATION.

The quality of the rations was so good that no ration boards were held in one Division after the first day.

FIELD KITCHENS.—It is desirable in future that greater uniformity in the arrangements of the kitchens should be enforced.

Amongst the battalions of the Aldershot Division two used field kitchens constructed according to Regulations and In-

structions for Encampments, page 37. Two battalions used their kettle to form a trench as directed in page 38. Seven battalions used gratings which were generally of the following dimensions, 5 feet by 4 feet by 1 foot, weighing about 50 lbs. and costing 12*s.* per set, one set of gratings being required for every 100 men; they are made to fold up and pack fairly close, but as the extra weight would amount to between four and five hundred lbs. per battalion, their use on field columns or manœuvres should be forbidden, since they could not be carried on service. The present service camp kettle, supplemented by the mess tin or canteen lid, provides sufficient means for cooking purposes in the field.

The arrangements for the messing and cooking in the field were not satisfactory. Owing to the inexperience of regiments there was occasionally a delay in obtaining the dinners after coming into camp. I recommend that the supervision of the arrangements of this nature be made the special duty of the second in command both in camp and quarters.

It is worthy of consideration, if, as I recommend, a free grocery ration is supplied during the Manœuvres, whether cocoa should not occasionally be substituted for coffee.

Fuel.—The present allowance of 3 lbs. per man is ample, and although I do not recommend any diminution, it is certain that the whole of it is seldom expended.

Messing.—The diet of the different battalions varied considerably. One battalion had stews every day, the sergeant cook stated he could not obtain flour to give the men pies. Four battalions gave no extras at breakfast; the other battalions gave either butter, cheese, or tinned meat. The Mounted Infantry had a hot meat breakfast daily, by taking one-fourth of the ration meat for that purpose, under the following system:—Half the men of each company had half a pound of

ration meat, the other half having bacon, liver, &c., and on the following day the arrangement was reversed. This left every man with three quarters of a pound of meat for dinner. Butter, cheese, or dripping was given daily at tea time. It appears that except in one battalion, enough dripping was saved to provide a free issue of puddings.

BREAD.—There was, as usual, considerable waste, and this is I apprehend inevitable with British soldiers until the daily ration of it is issued to them in two portions.

Some Commanding Officers complained that when the Divisions changed camps half the bread ration should have been issued over night. There would have been no difficulty in making such an arrangement had any commanding officers made the request. There is a tendency in our service to lean too much on the Supply department.

GROCERIES AND VEGETABLES.—Groceries were supplied from the Reserve Depot.

Some of the corps had no vegetables on the day they marched into camp, and I think the time has come when we should approximate our system in field columns and manœuvres to the conditions of service in the field. The vegetables, as usual, were provided, or supposed to be provided, under regimental arrangements, that is 28 different units were making separate contracts. It is obvious that this is not a good plan, and I recommend that not only vegetables but that milk be provided by Government.

Great care must, however, be taken that good supplies are issued at reasonable rates, for contractors were able to supply the groceries at a halfpenny per ration less than the price charged by Government. This point requires immediate attention.

I recommend that paragraph 17, Allowance Regulations, be

altered, and that groceries be supplied at cost price, unless, indeed, the issue is made free during the Manœuvres.

INDENTS.—The instructions contained in paragraph 13 of Aldershot Divisional Orders of 1st September, 1891 (Appendix H), were scarcely ever carried out in the Divisions as regards the 36 hours' notice, and the Supply officers deserve great credit for furnishing rations at short notice.

Some commanding Officers have represented that there was a delay in making the issues, but this arose mainly from the late receipt of regimental indents.

SPECIAL FREE ISSUES FROM CANTEENS.—During the first day of the Manœuvres in some battalions the men, although ordered to be supplied with something from the canteen, received only one biscuit. I gave instructions that a more adequate supply should be issued, but there was great diversity of treatment in this respect. In some corps as much as £8 was expended during the 16 days on every 100 men, and in another corps as little as £2. The general average being £5 12*s.* 8*d.* We recognize that horses require more food in camp than in stables. The time has come to admit the same argument for the men, and I recommend that the General Officer in command be allowed to provide what extras, in addition to ¼ lb. of meat, he thinks are absolutely necessary, at Government expense, up to a certain sum to be authorised beforehand. It is estimated it will not cost more than 1½*d.* per man per diem, it being given on days only when the larger forces are opposing each other. This year the amount would have been about £300.

3. TRANSPORT.

HORSES.—This work, always heavy, has been this year exceptionally so, owing to the inclement weather and heavy

roads. At the commencement of the preparations the Army Service Corps had 80,000 lbs. reserve of oats economised during the preceding winter months, which enabled the transport horses to be rationed up to 18 lbs. of oats per diem, according to their work.

Some of the horses fell off greatly in the first instance, but this is attributable to the want of experience on the part of some officers, as in other companies doing more work the horses retained their condition.

Nearly all the Army Service Corps transport having been taken out with the two Divisions the Officers Commanding Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers supplied teams for returning camp equipment and local duties at Aldershot between the 7th and 22nd September.

The Royal Artillery also provided transport for clearing Bordon and Whitehill on the termination of the Manœuvres.

The conduct of the Army Service Corps leaves nothing to be desired. For three months they have been doing even more work than they would have to do on active service, and nothing could be better than the spirit that they have shown throughout.

4. Ordnance Store Department.

Equipment.—In order to economise transport, Ordnance Store Depots had to be formed some time in advance, viz., on the 20th July at East Meon, and on the 5th August at Soberton, for a Division at each place, and also rest camps at Bordon and Whitehill each for a Brigade, and the difficulties of the department were still further enhanced by the changing over of the Divisions to the camps of their adversaries after the first week, with the additional difficulty of the varying strength of corps.

The two sets of camp equipment, each for over 6,000 men, had to be transferred the same morning. This change of camps adds greatly to the value of the tactical instruction afforded to the troops, but it is obvious that it increases the work and responsibility of the Ordnance Store Department.

It necessitated the sending out of 2576 tents and 44,000 blankets, and other equipment, representing a total value of £35,000 if new. Possibly, from want of practice, the demands were not formulated properly, but the capacity of the Senior Ordnance Store Officer is shown by the fact that only one bale of 25 blankets remained undrawn at Soberton, and none at East Meon, while all demands were met.

Last year more stores than absolutely required were transported to Berkshire, but this error was avoided in the recent Manœuvres.

I invite attention to the Regulations for the scale of Camp Equipment for Field Service. It is too limited for Peace Manœuvres. On the other hand, the standing camp scale is far too large. I submit a scale (Appendix I) which, if approved, I shall issue as the Aldershot Manœuvre scale. That some decided scale of this nature is necessary is shown by the fact that of the six Field Batteries taking part in the Manœuvres, not two demanded on the same form, and no two batteries demanded on the same scale. This would have been obviated if the demand had been put forward by the Officer commanding the Brigade Division.

At one camp, when the Division marched out all the units attempted to hand back their stores at the same moment. This will probably result in some expense to the troops, which might have been avoided by better Divisional arrangements.

The Senior Ordnance Store Officer has drawn my attention

to the fact that soldiers do not know how tents should be packed and put into the valises. I propose to add an instruction on this point to the field training of companies.

The experience gained at the Manœuvres showed that I might have made better arrangements for the equipment issued to the Army Service Corps employed on convoys. This will be obviated in future years.

It is worthy of consideration whether it will not be an economy during Peace Manœuvres to have special tents for the reception of stores, as the hospital marquee hitherto used for this purpose is not suitable. If my suggestion is approved, I am prepared to submit a proposal for the construction of one which will save money for the public. If this is not approved the hiring of a barn would, I think, be advantageous for storing of camp equipment, when it can be done.

Regulations supplied by the War Office were sent down as they are originally printed in 1890, and not being up to date were practically useless.

I am reporting separately, in a confidential paper, on the officers employed in the department, who all worked with the greatest energy and good will. Ordnance Store duties cannot however, be learnt in a few months, and our difficulties were increased by the fact that the aggregate service in the department of the five officers employed under the Senior Ordnance Store Officer amounted only to 36 months.

5. Pay of Troops.

Officers commanding units, acting under the advice of the Station Paymaster at Aldershot, took with them as a rule £25 in silver, while Canteen Presidents took about £25 in bronze.

Arrangements were made with the local bank at Petersfield to cash cheques as required.

The system of paying companies of battalions weekly, but on different days, enabled much less cash to be taken than would otherwise have been essential, as it was found that a great part of the money circulated through the canteen, and the president of the canteen was generally able to hand to the Captain of C company a considerable part of what he paid to A company two days previously. I recommend that in future we should trust less to canteens and brewers, and that each battalion should be allowed transport for a safe, the weight of which should be fixed.

6. Field Telegraphs and Telephones.

Early in August a line was run from Aldershot to Bordon for convenience of the Service in forming Depots at that place. At the end of the month the 1st Division Telegraph Battalion proceeded to West Meon, laying a line via Whitehill to that place and also to East Meon, Soberton, and Hambledon. The Hambledon line was in communication with the Postal System.

On the 7th and 8th September, telephone exchanges were established in each of the respective camps, and on the 15th a telegraph line was laid between West Meon and the Yeomanry camp at Exton; in all a total of 57 miles.

On the 4th, 16th, and 18th September, special lines were erected up to the actual zone of operations, and the movements of the troops were reported back into camp. Two officers were told off for the purpose of reporting, while a third remained in camp to follow the operations on a map; this was useful as a practice, but I do not, for the present, suggest its possibility in war.

The Director of Army Telegraphs considers that the office work was severe, and advocates a wider circulation of the advantages of the Telegraph Battalion being made among the Post Office servants in order to induce a greater number of trained telegraphists to enlist.

The Telephone Exchanges were much used during the Manœuvres and reduced considerably the work of orderlies.

The Press messages were sent by correspondents to Petersfield to be forwarded by rail. The instruments in use in the Military Offices do not transmit messages as quickly as the Post Office fast speed instruments, and the supply of operators was limited.

7. Post Office.

In one Division a Post Office was established with a sorter furnished by the Post Office at Petersfield. Two non-commissioned officers assisted the Post Office official. The expenses of the non-commissioned officers were guaranteed by the Post Office. The arrangements worked well, and such are necessary in these days of parcel post, and where postal dues must be collected.

8. Cyclists.

The question of establishing a permanent section of cyclists for orderly duty in every corps is well worthy of consideration. Cyclist orderlies were found very useful during the Cavalry Manœuvres of 1890, as they were during the Cavalry Drills of 1891, and again in the recent Autumn Manœuvres, when their services were invaluable. Their employment saves wear and tear and exposure of horses, as the cyclist can be kept under cover: he can also be kept close at hand and gets away

sooner. He delivers messages quicker than a mounted orderly and can move in frosty weather when a horse cannot well do so. In hilly country, with heavy lanes, however, he is useless.

The pace would improve if men were permanently employed on the duty, and there would be less damage to machines. Probably the best machine for military purposes has not yet been introduced. To save clothing, of which there is considerable wear and tear, the cyclist should be given cord pantaloons and stockings.

Two of the battalions which marched into Aldershot to take part in the Manœuvres brought cyclist sections composed mainly of non-commissioned officers. In the section of one battalion there were 6 colour-sergeants and sergeants out of 10 men. The practice of the non-commissioned officers and men riding on machines that will not carry a rifle should be forbidden. As in most other innovations the means have hitherto been found by voluntary efforts, battalions having mounted the riders out of regimental funds.

If the system is to be officially recognized it will be desirable to send an armourer to one of the makers' shops, so that after being instructed, he may himself instruct the riders in executing repairs which at present are unnecessarily troublesome and costly of execution.

9. Printing.

The hektograph did not answer owing to the damp weather. Either type writers or a small printing press is recommended for the use of each Division. Type writers cannot take the place of letterpress printing at Army Head-Quarters in the field.

VI. EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING.

1. Officers' Equipments.

During the Manœuvres the articles of equipment and clothing carried by officers differed in nearly all battalions. Some carried capes, some great-coats, some haversacks and field-glasses, while others carried nothing except a sword, and the mode of carrying articles varied even in battalions, and probably will do so until a General Order is issued. The first step towards ensuring uniformity is to lay down what the officers shall carry in peace and in war.

In my opinion for manœuvres the mounted officer should carry a sword on his waistbelt, with field-glasses over the left shoulder and haversack over the right shoulder, and on his saddle a water-bottle and cape or great-coat. Company officers should carry sword, rolled cape attached by two straps to waistbelt in centre of back to be worn when men carry great-coats or capes, haversack over the right shoulder, field-glasses and water-bottle over the left shoulder. A sealed pattern field-glass as to size and case should be laid down.

It is generally agreed that the long boot worn by Infantry officers is not suitable for any but show parades. The Infantry officer should regard his horse as a means of conveyance only to the fight, as once he comes under fire he cannot remain effective when in the saddle.

In many regiments which come here it is necessary to forbid the practice of wearing field boots which is common indeed in the service. These are, I believe, a compromise towards getting something to look smarter than a gaiter, but the part around the ankle after a time gets hard and cracks. I think

the balance of advantages is in favour of all Infantry officers, both mounted and company, wearing shooting boots, pantaloons, and putties.

2. Kersey Frocks and Trousers for Men.

These are, I think, sufficiently good if they were not altered after they leave Pimlico. Every regiment which comes to Aldershot has its clothing made too tight. At the conclusion of last year's drill season I noticed one of the best battalions here with trousers very tight at the knees. I caused it to be inspected and the trousers compared with the sealed pattern, ascertaining that over 50 per cent. of the trousers had been taken in at the knees after the commencement of the furlough season. Greater pains should be taken to check such alterations of clothing. It is worthy of consideration whether we should not treat the Infantry like the Cavalry who have a working and walking out dress. This might be done by keeping the tunic for the latter use.

3. Boots.

The boot as issued would be good enough if the sole were not so rigid, as it does not come to the shape of the man's foot. Once the boot is in possession of the soldier, it is in too many cases misused, the heel which should be kept low and broad is replaced by a high and small one, and in many cases repairs are very badly carried out. The practice, moreover, of constantly blacking the boots makes the leather inelastic and hard. Soldiers are very averse to dubbing their boots, on account of the loss of appearance. In many instances the men are allowed to fit themselves with boots with the almost

invariable result that after a few days' wear the great toe of the man can be seen protruding over the point of the boot. To soften the leather of boots they should have a fish oil worked into them by hand, and boots intended for wear should be put into good condition a week before a march, and during the last week before a march they should be worn daily.

4. Shirts.

I have noticed that many of the men of battalions who join the command wear linen or cotton shirts. This should be forbidden, but will never be checked until in the Army, as in the Navy, it is laid down that officers are to see frequently the underclothing of their men on parade.

5. Socks.

We have received a new pattern sock, the seam of which is brought to the side of the heels. I have not yet got the official report, but it is much liked and will probably help to reduce the number of sore feet. As compared with the previous pattern these socks protect the feet better, they fit better, and do not slip down around the ankle. It has been suggested that they last better if they are soaked in water before being worn.

6. Helmets.

The difficulties of obtaining a sightly head covering which shall give sufficient protection from sun and rain, and allow the soldier to fire when in marching order in the prone position, has not yet been overcome, and I fear it cannot be accomplished. It might be better to let the soldier have in England a show helmet, giving him a sun helmet when he

goes abroad. It is obvious that the several different patterns for the Colonies and India which exist cannot be necessary. One pattern for warm climates is sufficient. The soldier never walks out in a helmet for pleasure, as no helmet which is made in large numbers can ever be as comfortable as a cap. I am myself content, for service purposes, with the Morion shaped one brought forward last year by an officer of the Head-Quarter Staff, which enables the Infantry soldier to shoot or a gunner to lay a gun by a Scott's sight.

The round cap worn by the Infantry (Guards) is not serviceable; the Officer Commanding the only battalion that wore it reports that his men's caps are completely ruined, and he thinks there is scarcely one cap fit for wear on parade, although the Manœuvres lasted only 16 days for the battalion.

7. Water Bottles.

The order that the bottles should be filled and inspected every morning before the troops left camp was in many instances disobeyed. This should receive attention in future.

8. Shoeing.

The shoes being made of very soft material, wore quickly, and were very thin, and many broke in half. Horses were as a rule shod before going to the Manœuvres, and one pair of shoes was carried for each horse, but this was not sufficient for even a fortnight.

The nature of the soil caused many to be lost. One squadron lost 29 shoes, the Field Artillery with about three times the strength, only lost 24, which indicates that some-

thing also is due to careless shoeing-smiths. The Artillery had, however, only 50 sets of machine made shoes.

After the return march to Aldershot it was found that many horses of one of the Divisional squadrons were suffering from bruised feet. This squadron had only been employed for 13 days, mainly on turf and over cultivated land.

Unless we can ensure better than we have done that the machine made shoes shall be of fair quality, I should like to reconsider my recommendation made last year that 50 per cent. should be shod with them.

9. Remarks on Experimental Equipment.

Water Bottles—(Lewes Pattern).—These are of two kinds, one iron enamelled the other tin, both fitted with a filter which in a short time gets rusty and useless, and in addition the arrangement is too elaborate to be suitable for troops. The tin pattern soils the men's clothing and the enamel on the iron one soon chips. (Boyes' Pattern and New Pattern Iron Enamelled).—Both these bottles are favourably regarded, the iron being covered with felt. As the reports on these two, which differ only in their shape, were equal, I have had the bottles passed to other corps for further comparison and report, which is to be rendered on the 1st January, 1892.

Water Troughs—(Molyneux-Seel).—These form a useful addition to the water cart, enabling water-bottles to be quickly filled and preventing waste of water.

Drinking Cup.—I caused a drinking cup to be attached by a chain to each cart. This is convenient and prevents the waste of water incurred by the men holding their mouths down to the tap hole.

ENTRENCHING TOOLS (WOODGATE).—These were tried for carriage. The combined carriage of pick and bayonet and of spade and bayonet is not satisfactory, but when carried singly they are easier for the men than the Wallace tool. Some slight alterations are now being made to raise the carriage higher than the hips, and a further trial will be carried out.

AXES—PICK AND FELLING (HOGAN'S COMBINED).—I recommend the adoption of this tool for pioneers. The weight of the axe head gives greater force when the tool is used as a pick, and similarly the weight in the pick allows of a more powerful stroke with the axe.

HEAD COLLARS (STUD ATTACHMENTS).—These were used by the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, and Army Service Corps, but are approved of by the Royal Artillery only. I cannot recommend their adoption, believing there is nothing so serviceable as a strap and buckle, for all stud holes fray out.

FROG SWORD SADDLE (MARK II).—The Mark II. is an improvement, but the ring strap should be slightly wider, while the stud should be lower and should be riveted right through.

HOOF PICKERS.—I recommend their being carried on the shoe case behind the sword. They are so seldom used except to remove tan when the horse comes out of the Riding School that it seems scarcely worth while to put them on the men's bodies.

TRACE HOOKS (EXPERIMENTAL).—These are certainly an improvement on the existing pattern. Spare rubber rings should be taken on service to replace those which may be damaged.

HORSE COLLARS—(STEEL).—There can be no question that these form the most satisfactory collar for Army Service Corps

work. They make so much noise, however, by the rattling of the links and, what for want of a better name I must call hame hooks, that I do not recommend them in their present form for fighting units.

SWIVELS, PILING (MAGAZINE RIFLE).—The piling swivels are now quite satisfactory.

LIGHTENING LOAD OF CAVALRY HORSE.—With the view of lightening the load at present put on the Cavalry horse, as laid down in the Manual for Field Service, Cavalry, 1888, Appendix IV., pages 56–57, I obtained sanction for the following articles, packed in the corn sacks, being carried in forage carts, of which two were allotted to each squadron.

	lbs.	ozs.
Corn sack	1	13
Picketing gear	3	4
Ankle boots	3	13
Horse brush	0	11
Clothes brush	0	4
Stable sponge	0	1
Oil bottle	0	4
Pot of grease	1	$1\frac{3}{4}$
Pocket ledger	0	2
Spare boot laces	0	2
Service cap	0	$4\frac{3}{4}$
Flannel shirt	1	1
Drawers	1	$0\frac{1}{2}$
Socks	0	5
Towel	0	$8\frac{1}{2}$
Holdall	0	10
Housewife	0	$3\frac{3}{4}$
	15	$9\frac{1}{4}$

	lbs.	ozs.
Brought forward	15	9¼
Pad for surcingle and surcingle ...	0	12¼
Spare pants	2	8
Putties...	0	8
Cape	2	0
Forage net	2	2½
Waterproof sheet	2	5
	24	13

The experiment answered well, the officers who carried it out reporting favourably on it.

It was, however, brought to notice that the forage cart is not properly balanced for this sort of work. It is too short in the body, causing the load to ride high, with the result that re-adjustment frequently becomes necessary on the march.

I think a light four-wheeled wagon is better adapted for this purpose than a two-wheeled vehicle, in spite of the danger that, once we get to four wheels four horses will be demanded, and there is risk of overloading.

The four-wheeled wagon is more easily packed, and does not require the nicety of adjustment which is essential with the forage cart, and which I do not think would be attended to in the hurry of packing up on service. Moreover, the load of the four-wheeled wagon, even when hastily packed, does not shift to any appreciable extent.

One of the squadron leaders considers that the picketing gear should be carried on the horses. I do not agree with this, as, if horses have had a hard day's work they will stand quietly enough fastened to a peg, by the head rope, until the carts come up, and one peg could be carried on the sword for this

purpose, the head rope being already on the horse. If the horses have not had a hard day's work, there will not be much delay before the arrival of the carts.

I strongly recommend that a specially constructed light four-wheeled wagon, with a cover, be sent to Aldershot for trial as soon as possible.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Weather.

The week ending 12th September can be described as bright and warm, the last four days being very hot. There was, however, a pleasant breeze on the top of the Downs. On the 13th September the weather, though still warm, became cloudy, and the glass went back 3-10ths, rain falling during the night. On both the 14th and 15th September it was fine in the early morning, but steady rain commenced about 9 A.M., and continued during the whole day. The 16th and 17th September were fine, cloudy, and cool, but the glass continued to fall steadily. On the 18th September heavy rain fell from early morning until the evening, and the hills remained covered with mist the whole day. On the 19th very heavy rain fell from early morning and continued without intermission, so that in the forenoon the orders were issued to abandon the Manœuvres; and as no improvement in the state of the weather occurred for many days after the return to quarters, this decision was fortunate

2. Bands in the Villages.

The playing of the bands in the villages became very popular, although it would have been more appreciated if I had given longer notice, and the hours had been somewhat

later, for owing to the delay in the harvesting many of the villagers were still on the fine days working in the fields at 5 o'clock. If, however, the hour had been made later than 4 P.M. the bands would not have got back to their camps until after nightfall.

3. Police.

The conduct of the troops was so good that very little assistance was required from the police in maintaining order.

The Military Mounted Police in each camp might have been reduced by two, and they should have arrived there before any of the troops.

The Chief Constable of the County furnished four mounted constables, two were located near each Divisional Camp; but they were mounted on horses untrained to military sights and sounds, and the undivided attention of their riders was not given to their duties.

4. Time Gun.

This proved to be of great use in ensuring punctuality.

In future it should be fired at 8 or 8·30 P.M., and last post should not be later than 9·30 P.M.

5. Canteens.

In future, when Militia or Volunteers join camp with the Line, the arrangements for canteens and tentage should approximate nearly to those of the rest of the force.

VIII. HEALTH.

1. Health of Men and Medical Arrangements.

From our experience this year it is evident the number of medical officers I had detailed, two for each Division, was not

sufficient; as, although the health of the men was good, yet with young soldiers, the numbers who reported sick were greater than two medical officers could inspect before the daily work of the Division commenced. The greatest number which reported sick in either Division in one day was 240. During the 16 days' absence from Aldershot, 2400 reported themselves sick, but of these 41 per cent only were placed under treatment; of these 29 per cent were treated in camp, whilst 12 per cent were sent to Aldershot. Of the cases sent to Aldershot 114 were for venereal, 26 for blistered feet, and the remainder from other causes, principally rheumatism. (See Appendix K.)

The selection of tobacco which is to be sold in Regimental canteens requires special attention. At present it is generally too strong for consumption by the soldier whose marching and accuracy in shooting is materially affected by its use. On service the soldier could not use these tobaccos without the risk of originating or aggravating heart disease.

The Medical Officer in Charge of one Division states in his report on the 2nd day's march to the Manœuvres that "all the cases of vertigo, with pains in the chest, palpitation of the heart and shortness of breath, so common amongst young soldiers, are I believe entirely due to a combination of tobacco and prolonged exertion."

There is fashion in this taste as in every other, and it is most desirable to gradually establish the fashion of smoking tobaccos of milder brands than those at present sold in canteens. I recommend this question be taken up at once.

I now regret that I did not utilize the Manœuvres for the testing of a field hospital. In Section V., sub-section 4, I allude to the necessity of teaching soldiers how to roll and place in its valise the bell tent. It is thought there may be

considerable difficulty in repacking a field hospital into the regulated space by any except those who have had considerable practice in doing so. I recommend I be permitted to send out a field hospital when employing field columns next year.

2. Health of Horses.

The general condition of the horses remained good in spite of the very inclement weather. Epizootic fever had prevailed in one Cavalry regiment before the squadron detached from it left Aldershot, but partly owing to the care which the squadron leader took of his horses, they returned, if anything, in rather better condition than they were in when they started.

IX. COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES.

Many owners who were willing to give permission for the troops to manœuvre over their land objected to encampments being formed on it, and therefore two forms of agreement were draw out (see Appendices L and M), to take the place of the one form used in 1890. Except as at Churn last year, where the owner, Lord Wantage, gave the whole of his encamping ground without making any charge, it will be generally necessary to have these two forms, and to hire the land actually used for encampments, because as pasture is favourable for the troops to encamp on, so is the damage of it likely to be serious in continuous wet weather.

The prices paid on this occasion for grass land averaged £1, and for arable land 15*s.* per acre, and it was stipulated that no claims should be made except for damage to hedges and gates, and that the troops were on vacating the ground to fill in all

excavations to the satisfaction of the owner. Too much trouble cannot be taken by officers to ensure that the troops fill in tent trenches, rubbish pits, latrines, &c. The amount claimed at Soberton was heavier than it would have been, in consequence of neglect in this matter.

As the system of Manœuvres without an Act of Parliament progress, ground for encampments will probably be procured at much lower rates, as there is no doubt arable fields benefit greatly by being used as camping grounds for men and horses. I suggest I be permitted to send an officer into the Meon-Soberton district in 1892, to report on the state of the crops on fields where troops were encamped. Appendix N shows clearly the compensation paid for damages, rent of ground, use of water, and grants in aid of roads. The total amount exceeds what would be paid under ordinary conditions of weather. In continuous rain the camps must be shifted frequently, and consequently a larger area of ground is required.

I made the mistake of not sending the Military Police forward before the advanced parties arrived on the ground. These parties are always under less control than the regiments, and their conduct gave rise to the only claim made for wilful damage.

Greater attention might have been paid by officers to the prevention of damage, when marching home after the "Cease Fire" had been sounded.

In future it might be well to tell off two officers to take charge of spectators. This would add not only to the comfort of the latter, but would prevent their getting into the way of the troops and doing damage to crops.

The occupiers named an assessor, but it was not found necessary to call in his assistance, as the claims on the whole were fair and just, and the patriotic spirit of the owners and

occupiers enabled the officers representing the War Office to settle them without difficulty.

About 10 days after the termination of the Manœuvres, all claims having been received, the assessors went down to the ground, and having come to an understanding with the claimants, paid the money due to them on the spot, taking a receipt. All claims except those for damage of roads were disposed of in two days. This was greatly appreciated by those concerned, who dislike correspondence.

SUTLERS' WAGONS.—Most of the damage done to the roads for which compensation has been demanded this year has been by Sutlers' wagons, mainly those hired by brewers; the great cause of difference between the service and the Sutlers' transport being that the army wagon carries two tons with a 3-in. tyre, while the others carry four tons on wheels with 2-in. tyres.

I am considering the subject, but any tax imposed on the wagons would eventually be paid for by the troops.

X. EXPENSES.

The sum placed at my disposal for Drills and Manœuvres this year amounted to £5179. Later I was directed, if possible, to provide for Cavalry Drills, which were not contemplated when the original amount was granted.

These drills cost £414, leaving £4765. The actual cost of the Manœuvres was £4246, or £519 less than the amount available. (For details see Appendix O.)

The expenditure is under my estimate, which is accounted for by the period of manœuvres having been curtailed.

It is right that I should place on record how much my duties were lightened by the assistance I received before and

during the Manœuvres from you and other members of the Head-Quarter Staff. Your presence on the ground enabled me to effect a considerable saving, for after visiting the camps on Friday evening, the 18th September, I came to the conclusion that should the weather continue very inclement next day, it would be well to disperse the troops. I communicated with you early next morning, and having obtained your concurrence, immediate steps were taken, which resulted in the whole of the mounted troops marching to Aldershot, with the exception of one Field Battery which marched to Hilsea, and the Infantry of one Division reaching Woolmer, except one battalion of it which proceeded by rail to Woolwich, and another which marched to Portsmouth that night.'

XI. RESULTS OF EXPENDITURE.

On the 23rd September I recorded my great satisfaction with the conduct of all concerned during the Manœuvres. I then wrote:—

"Soldiers of all ranks have shown unflagging interest in the work, and the cheerful manner in which the great discomfort of the last few days, caused by bad weather, was borne by them impressed the Lieutenant-General Commanding most favourably.

"He has received from many of the residents living in the neighbourhood of the manœuvre ground, and from the civil police, uniformly satisfactory accounts of the behaviour of the troops."

From what I have learned from several different sources of information, I am confident that the conduct and general bearing of the troops created a most favourable impression in

the district in which they were working; this is the more remarkable, as I have good reason for believing that the massing of so many young men around quiet villages was regarded with great apprehension by many in the neighbourhood, but was fortunately removed by the behaviour of the men. This happy result was doubtless brought about to a great extent by the care exercised by the officers, not only in maintaining discipline, but also in so watching over the comfort of the men that they had no reason for desiring to leave camp.

In tactical skill, officers of all ranks have improved to a very great degree; but the improvement in military spirit, in eagerness to learn and to submit cheerfully to great physical discomforts, is even more remarkable, and this spirit reacts naturally on the lower ranks.

While there has been this great improvement amongst Regimental Officers, increased efficiency of Staff and Supply Departments was manifested to at least an equal degree. In the Manœuvres of former years, most of the Supplies were, I believe, obtained by contract, whereas on this occasion, as also in 1890, everything was obtained through the Army Service Corps.

The sudden abandonment of the Manœuvres, necessitating the conveyance of rations, which had been already prepared at Soberton and East Meon, to Woolmer, was carried out without any difficulty or friction. This was in no way due to my exertions, but to the knowledge, energy, and skill of the Staff and Supply Officers serving with me, to all of whom I am greatly indebted.

I am reporting separately on the attainments of all the Staff and Commanding Officers, but I must here record that in the whole of the arrangements before and during the

Manœuvres, the Aldershot Divisional Staff, by taking all details off my hands, enabled me to devote my time to the initiation and consideration of tactical schemes, and thus to endeavour to obtain for the country the best value for its expenditure.

(Signed), EVELYN WOOD,
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL.

This document does not leave much opportunity to the general officer who may be called upon to succeed Sir Evelyn Wood in the direction of Autumn Manœuvres. And, indeed, it is a common remark among experienced soldiers at Aldershot and elsewhere, that whatever may be the type of the coming man, he will find so much progress has been made at the great camp, that the machine will pretty well run alone if he will but let it. But there remain a few points to be noticed in the work at Aldershot, where an officer of rank and culture and renown writes to me :

"No detail is too small for Sir Evelyn, no undertaking too great. What he does he does thoroughly." Another high staff-officer has said to me; "When he leaves Aldershot I don't know where a successor will be found, for few men have so much fire under the boiler."

Even the sanitary arrangements he sees to personally, and inspects frequently, at unexpected moments. If genius consists, as has been said, in an infinite capacity

for taking trouble, then does Sir Evelyn deserve the name which is, however, too often bestowed upon eccentric incapables. All experimental equipment is tried under his own eyes, and he personally tests it all, down to the smallest detail. The new ranges at Bisley and Ash were made under his care and individual supervision by military labour in the shortest possible time, and at a cost almost ridiculously small in comparison with that of other ranges of not one-tenth the capacity. Lastly, he secured for the soldier, not in Aldershot camp only, but throughout the land also, the great boon of travelling by rail, and most lines of steamers, at a reduced rate, equivalent to return journey for a single fare, and this privilege was extended to the soldier's family, if "on the strength." As a claim has been put forward, elsewhere, for the initiation of this concession, it may be said, once for all, that Sir Evelyn personally "interviewed" the managers of the various railway and wrote to the managers of the steamboat lines on the subject, and did the work entirely "off his own bat," scarcely anyone being taken into his confidence on the subject until the privilege had been secured. Moreover, at Aldershot every opportunity is given to the soldier to avail himself of the concession, as the General holds that there is no recruiting sergeant equal to the holiday-making soldier, if he be smart, sober, well conducted and contented, as everyone is made at Aldershot if the thing be possible. I have watched the

reforms of the past three seasons there with a very searching eye. I have sought every opportunity of ascertaining the opinions of all ranks on the matter. And from general officer to private there is but one opinion, which is that Sir Evelyn has but one fault, an ineradicable fault: he is up much too early for the convenience of those who are late of getting to bed, or are heavy sleepers.

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